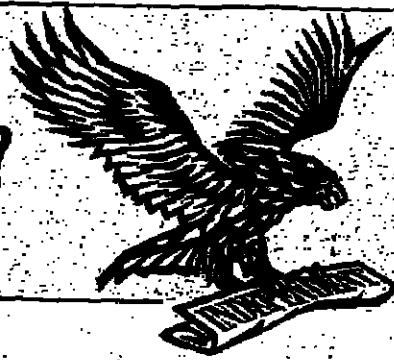


More tea, vicar?

Magazine



Looking back at Cubby

Page 3: Obituary, page 14



Fashion by degrees — the class of '96

Weekend



THE INDEPENDENT

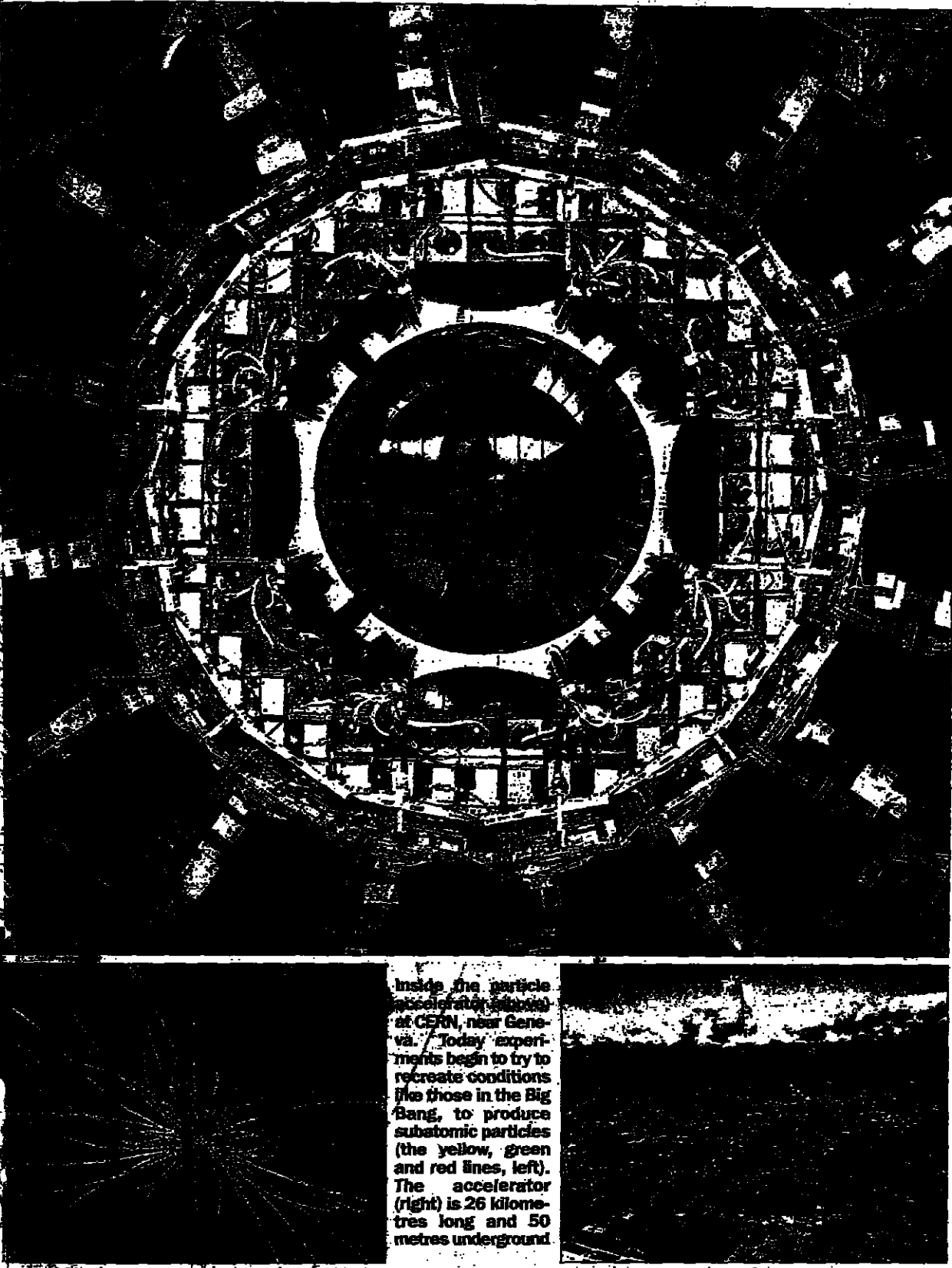
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SATURDAY 29 JUNE 1996

WEATHER: Sunny, 15-20°C

50p

In the beginning was the creation. Now scientists try again...



Inside the particle accelerator at CERN, near Geneva. Today experiments begin to try to recreate conditions like those in the Big Bang, to produce subatomic particles (the yellow, green and red lines, left). The accelerator (right) is 26 kilometres long and 50 metres underground.

Finally they are ready to restage the birth of time

HARLES ARTHUR Science Correspondent

The Universe is a few days away from its second Big Bang. Though this one will be more modest than the first, 15 billion years ago, which brought everything into existence. This time, a pair of particles that survive a few billionths of a second will suffice.

The repeat is scheduled for today, and will occur about 1 metre below the Jura hills near Geneva, as part of a series of experiments in the particle accelerator operated by CERN, the European laboratory for particle physics.

But instead of a whole Universe, CERN's scientists will be busy — in fact, overjoyed — to see some particles that have never been observed, though they have been predicted by theory for years. They hope the experiments, due to start after

calibration tests this weekend, will produce a particle known as a "chargino" — one of the missing links in the enormous cast of subatomic particles predicted by theory. This belongs to a class of particles known as "supersymmetrical" (because of their mathematical properties rather than their shape) and theory suggests that they play a crucial — if elusive — part in subatomic physics.

Discovering a chargino "would be a major discovery that would reveal a new facet of nature," said Chris Llewellyn-Smith, CERN's director, yesterday.

However, the 400-strong team on the Large Electron-Positron Collider (LEP) must first create conditions similar to those an instant after the Big Bang — the moment when the Universe came into being. In the superhot, superdense environment that existed then, super-

symmetrical particles could have existed fleetingly as separate objects. As the Universe expanded and cooled, they became inseparable constituents of ordinary matter.

CERN's LEP will recreate these early conditions by accelerating beams of electrons and their antiparticle, positrons, almost to the speed of light around the 26-kilometre accelerator buried near Geneva. The beams will be whirled in opposite directions around the accelerator, gaining energy until they are brought together in a reaction chamber, where they will annihilate each other in a pure blast of energy. Instantaneously, the energy density in the chamber will echo that one ten-billionth of a second after the Big Bang — and so should allow the re-creation of the particles that were able to exist then.

If the "chargino" is discovered, it would help to tie to-

gether strands of theoretical physics which have for years attempted to link the four forces of nature — electrical, gravitational, the "strong" nuclear force (which holds the nuclei of atoms together) and the "weak" nuclear force (which allows particles called neutrinos to interact with other matter).

"Supersymmetrical particles connect them all," said Dr Llewellyn-Smith. "It would be one of the greatest discoveries."

If it happens, it would make up for one of CERN's most embarrassing discoveries a fortnight ago: two empty Heineken beer bottles which had reached the parts that beer should not reach.

The bottles were found in the high-vacuum tube of the accelerator, after earlier calibration tests had puzzlingly produced no results at all. This, it turned out, was because the particle beams had been absorbed by the glass.

Blair flies into a Scottish storm

COLIN BROWN Chief Political Correspondent

Tony Blair put the credibility of his leadership of the Labour Party on the line last night after telling Scottish activists his decision to go for a referendum on devolution was a mark of toughness, not a betrayal.

He faced a fresh charge last night that he had reneged over a declaration signed by the cross-party Constitutional Convention that sovereignty should be given to the Scottish people. The SNP and Liberal Democrats accused him of dumping that promise with a commitment in his Edinburgh speech that the devolution Bill will contain a clear statement "of the sovereignty of Parliament".

As Mr Blair was threatened with a growing revolt, Jim Wallace, the Liberal Democrat spokesman, said his assertion of Westminster parliamentary sovereignty over the Scottish people was "yet another attempt to reassure 'lorry middle England'".

Shell-shocked Labour supporters held back their anger, but Mr Blair's retreat from his commitment to a tax-raising parliament, in the face of a "lorry onslaught" over a "Tartan Tax", was seen as the biggest test he has faced since ditching Labour's Clause IV commitment to public ownership.

The shift of policy by Labour has been so great that the "lorry" Party leadership privately admitted last night it was having to change its own strategy for dealing with Mr Blair. It is dropping the claims that Labour has not changed and plans an offensive over allegations that Mr Blair has shown "weakness" by backing off. They claimed there would be more retreats by Mr Blair on the European Social Chapter, and the European single currency. John Major said Mr Blair had "buckled at the first whiff of grapes". I think this is the first of many retreats.

Mr Blair insisted that the Government's strategy for making the most of the uncertainty in the Labour ranks at a special political meeting of the Cabinet on Monday.

The centre-piece of Mr Blair's fight back against Mr Blair will be the Tories' charge that Labour is threatening to tear apart the union. That may

Referendums are a good way of allowing the people to choose directly on big issues. Tony Blair was right to go for one on Scottish devolution. But in adding a second question, about powers to tax, the Labour leader made it clear that he comes not to praise Home Rule for Scotland but to bury it.

This is a momentous change in Labour policy, however disguised. Labour MPs are admitting privately that they do not expect that the Scots, or anyone else, would go out of their way to vote explicitly for a tax-raising power. Is that not the whole point? On this basis, any potentially difficult policy can be dropped simply by promising a post-electoral referendum before it is introduced. What about one for the whole UK on income tax?

Yet Mr Blair has defended the need for a tax-raising Scottish Parliament, for instance in his John Smith memorial lecture in February. Then he approvingly quoted an old Conservative briefing which said it would "impart a financial discipline as well as enabling the Assembly to innovate, establish new priorities and develop neglected fields." Quite right: the power to tax is what marks a proper parliament from a mere elected body.

Blair's type do not stop there. The Scottish Constitutional Convention is a Scottish Labour MP's "the Scottish people to decide the form of government best suited to their needs". Yesterday Blair retreated from this bold clar-



ity to a conventional and conservative definition of sovereignty. He said his legislation on Scotland and Wales would include "a clear statement of the sovereignty of Parliament." Westminster would merely establish "a subsidiary assembly or parliament".

By those words and by revisiting taxation through a referendum they must expect to lose, Mr Blair and his advisers have in effect subverted the Convention and the leftish Scottish political establishment it embodied. No wonder they are furious.

Blair's judgement is that the Scottish anger matters much less than blunting the attack of English Conservatives. And in the short term, it is probably the right tactical judgement; the retreat on Scottish Home Rule makes Blair seem more conservative on the one big area where he had before looked radical. Never dangerous, he now looks even safer.

But that carries its own, longer-term dangers. It makes it clear that the Scottish assembly will be seen as a damp squib. That failure would split the Scottish Labour Party, help the SNP and further destabilise the Union. It feels, in short, like a clever London fix that is just a little too clever to work.

The Labour leader, who was hounded and heckled when he entered the hall at Edinburgh University, acknowledged he was taking a risk over a referendum on devolution for Wales and Scotland with a separate question for Scots voters on whether they want it to have tax-raising powers. But he said risks had to be taken.

Last night, the party's Scottish executive swung behind the leader, backing the referendum by 20 votes to 4. John McAllion, the Labour MP who resigned as Scottish constitutional affairs spokesman, said: "This change to the policy has been imposed on the party without consultation, without debate and without the opportunity to influence or to change that decision. It is not, therefore, Labour Party policy."

"I accept that it is the role of spokesmen to articulate and to promote party policy, even where they personally disagree with that policy. But I repeat — this is not party policy."

Mr Blair offered an olive branch to Mr McAllion, saying he could rejoin the front bench or become a minister in a Labour government. Mr McAllion said he would not desert Labour for the SNP, but he angrily objected to the authoritarian style of Mr Blair's leadership.

John Prescott, the deputy leader, defended the plan for a referendum as a means of ensuring a future Tory government could not "unpick" the devolution legislation, which is to be introduced in the first 12 months of Labour taking office. Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, accused the Labour leader of a "sell out", and Mr Wallace accused Mr Blair of tearing up the Convention declaration on the sovereign right of the Scottish people.

However, the Labour leadership is confident that it will retain the support of the parliamentary party for the Scottish devolution policy.

Corruption case reveals rot at heart of the Met

SON BENNETTO Met Correspondent

A police service was rocked yesterday after an officer was led for 11 years in one of the most corruption scandals for years.

John Donald, 37, a former detective constable at the Metropolitan Police force's Criminal Police Squad, was indicted at the Old Bailey of using secret information which had several investigations collapse and compromised police operational units.

The conviction also raises disturbing questions about a police team which allowed a low

ranking officer to obtain confidential data with apparent ease.

It was only after an investigation by the BBC TV's *Phoenix* programme that the high level corruption was exposed.

Mrs Justice Heather Steel told Donald that he had "betrayed the trust of both your colleagues, superiors and the public on a massive scale."

"The sentence must reflect the public concern that, as a police officer, you misused and abused your position of responsibility and trust. It must not only punish you, but deter any other police officer who may be similarly tempted," she warned.

The judge also jailed Don-

ald's paymaster, Kenneth Cressey, to seven years for providing the bribes.

Donald, who was described as a top drugs officer and the backbone of his team, had been motivated by greed. He had financial problems and more than half his income was going in support for his former wife.

He had also been seduced by and envied the lifestyle enjoyed by "those who live outside the law."

Donald had admitted taking or agreeing to accept bribes for information about undercover police operations.

Cressey, 38, from Ditton, Kent, was convicted yesterday

for giving or offering Donald more than £60,000 for information and other help.

After the case yesterday Commander Roy Clark, regional co-ordinator of the South East Regional Crime Squad (Sercs) said in a statement: "Donald was more than corrupt, he committed acts of treachery beyond belief. He sold operational secrets to those involved in organised crime that put the lives of police officers at risk."

By doing this he became part of the criminal underworld which the public had paid him to combat. The damage he has done to the efforts of policing and in particular to

the efforts of Sercs has been considerable."

The judge said Donald's "greatest betrayal was to offer to provide Cressey with information to pass on to two international criminals, Michael Lawson and Kenneth Noye", who were subjects in an Anglo-American police investigation into drug running.

The trial followed a raid in south London in September 1992 in which Cressey was arrested and a bag containing 52kg of cannabis resin was seized.

Cressey was charged with possessing the cannabis resin with intent to supply. Although

he was convicted yesterday of the corruption charges the jury failed to reach a verdict on the drug allegations and he faces a retrial on that charge.

The pair's corrupt activities included one deal when, for £10,000, Donald agreed to provide Cressey with sensitive information about two of his associates, Kenny Noye and Michael Lawson.

Catching corruption, page 4

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SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Tube travellers face a second 24-hour strike next Wednesday after drivers rejected a call to go to arbitration.

The executive of Aslef renewed its threat to continue industrial action in pursuit of a claim for a shorter working week after turning down an invitation by management to take the dispute to the industry's wages board. Further stoppages are planned for 8 and 16 July.

Low Adams, general secretary of the union, said: "The issue is very clear. London Underground promised a shorter working week last year and has now reneged on the deal. There is no need to arbitrate on that."

At the Royal Mail, postal workers began clearing a backlog of millions of letters built up during a day-long national stoppage which ended at noon yesterday. Leaders of the Communications Workers' Union are due to resume pay and productivity negotiations on Monday. **Barrie Clement**

Gunnar Thomas Hamilton may have killed himself in a "ritualistic" fashion after carrying out the massacre he had planned for months, the 23rd day of the Dunblane inquiry was told yesterday.

The assessment was given by a forensic psychologist Professor David Cooke, who said the way Hamilton took his own life - switching weapons to a .357-revolver, after killing 16 children and their teacher with a Browning 9mm semi-automatic pistol - had ritual overtones. "I would speculate that he formed the [suicide] intention before he killed the other people." The inquiry was adjourned until next week when evidence will be heard from one more witness and lawyers will deliver their final submissions.

Labour is planning an ambush to inflict a damaging defeat on the Government over the plans by Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, for the £1.5bn sale of armed forces married quarters.

Senior Labour sources confirmed that the Opposition is planning to force a vote on the issue before the recess. They will be challenging the plan, a defeat of a Labour motion opposing the sale would be embarrassing for the Government but would not halt the sale, which is expected to be confirmed in the next fortnight with the naming of a buyer, which could be a Japanese bank. However, the Government is also facing a second defeat over the scheme on an amendment by Baroness Parks, a Tory peer, to the Housing Bill in the Lords, which would put the deal off for a year to allow more consultation.

A judge was remanded on bail by magistrates at Bow Street court, central London, yesterday charged in connection with a 1980s mortgage fraud.

Richard Gee, 55, is accused of trying to defraud building societies and mortgage lenders of "hundreds of thousands of pounds". He sat at Middlesex Guildhall Crown Court in Westminster until he was suspended last November following his arrest in connection with the fraud inquiry. A statement issued by his solicitors said: "Having fully cooperated with a seven-month investigation, Judge Gee is surprised that the Crown Prosecution Service have come to the decision to prosecute him. But now that this decision has been made, he looks forward to clearing his name."

A stricken Russian cruise ship docked safely in port yesterday after spending nearly 10 hours drifting in the North Sea with a flooded engine room.

The 4,264-tonne *Alla Tarasova* was towed into Peterhead by two tugboats shortly before 3pm. The ship had been on a cruise to the Orkney Islands when it ran into trouble on the north-east coast at about 5am. For much of the day, the vessel drifted without power and four rescue helicopters and three lifeboats stood by in case the 71 passengers and 68 crew had to be airlifted to safety.

Towns in the south-east, long regarded as Britain's most prosperous region, have become the "worst-performing" retail locations, according to a new report.

Investment Property Database, found that the worst-performing towns of the 232 locations covered was Epsom in Surrey, where rental returns fell by 3.1 per cent between 1992 and 1995. Other towns at the bottom of the table are Romford (up 1.4 per cent), Watford (up 1.7 per cent), Dorking (2.1 per cent), and Sevenoaks (3.6 per cent).

The list is headed by St Andrews in Scotland, site of the historic golf course, where rental values rose by 18.8 per cent over the three years to 1995. In second place was Birmingham (up 17.9 per cent), followed by Middlesbrough (17.4 per cent), and Inverness (17 per cent).

Oldies line up for rock of ages

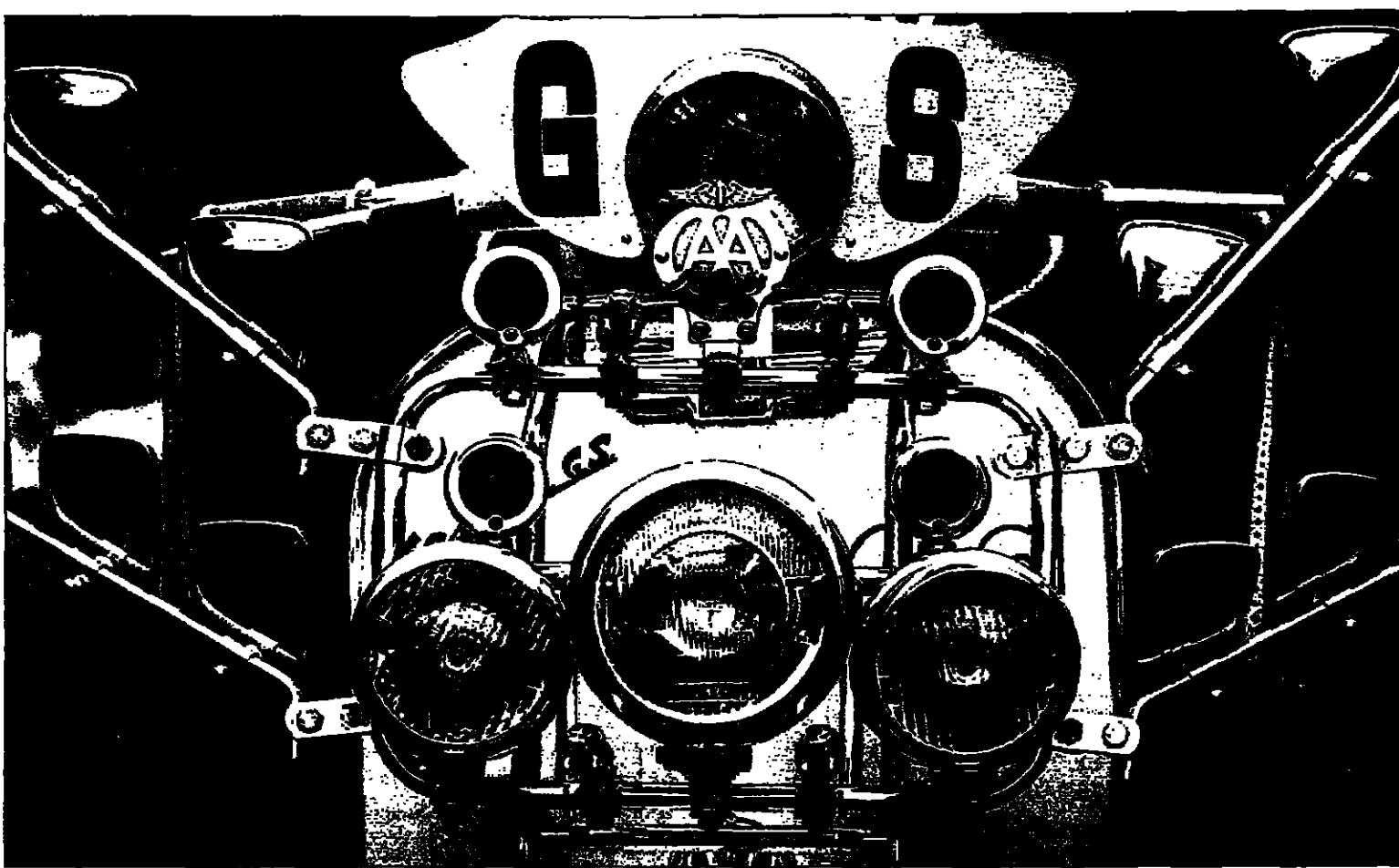
Old rock and rollers never die. They don't even fade away. They just retire and come back in style, writes David Lister.

Today's concert in Hyde Park in front of 150,000 people is one of the better examples of time warp concerts. The Who (retired 1989) are re-forming for the premiere live performance of their rock opera *Quadrophenia* (composed 1973).

In one of the strongest line ups for years they are joined by Bob Dylan and Eric Clapton, and - representing more contemporary tastes - Alanis Morissette.

The concert to raise money for The Prince's Trust also features a band of unemployed young people, trained at The Prince's trust rock school for all of a week.

The price of tickets at the Mastercard sponsored gig are £8, the lowest at a major rock concert for some decades.



Top gear: The Sixties' Vespa being used for today's performance of *Quadrophenia* by The Who in Hyde Park, London. Photograph: Brian Harris

Labour plan angers pensioners

Labour yesterday published its plans for future pension policy short of any firm spending commitments.

They brought an assessment from Paul Johnson, a specialist at the independent Institute of Fiscal Studies, that in terms of broad outline and firm commitments, Labour's policy now was "little different from the Government's".

The package brought a warning from Jack Jones, President of the National Pensioners' Convention, that a determined effort would be made at this year's Labour party conference to restore the link between pensions and earnings which Labour had promised at the last election.

Chris Smith, Labour's social security spokesman, insisted Labour's plans would offer new security in retirement as the party said its "over-arching objective" was to ensure that all pensioners "share fairly in the

Policy is 'little different' from Tories, says Nicholas Timmins

Government-devised rules. Labour believes that such a scheme should offer lower management of personal pensions, and place better returns on the existing system of SERPS.

The pensioners could include "individual savings accounts" allowing people to top up their basic contribution with savings that could be used for pensions or other purposes, although tax treatment of those is undecided.

For the poorest pensioners, income support may become a "pension entitlement" with simpler claim forms and with council tax and housing benefit

records used to help identify the 600,000 poorest pensioners who are entitled to income support but do not claim it.

If completely successful, that could add around £500m to public spending, although Mr Smith claimed the money, in theory, was already in the Government's budget.

It will "keep under review" the idea of a guaranteed minimum pension and will consider paying contributions into SERPS for carers and those on

low wages.

The basic state pension will remain and "at the very least" rise in line with prices, Mr Smith said, but Labour is refusing to say that it would rise in line with earnings. An independent body, which will include pensioners, will monitor Labour's performance, he added.

The package was greeted as "fundamentally disappointing" by Help the Aged for its lack of firm commitments. A Tory spokesman said that Labour, in reality, planned to raise pensions in line with earnings and introduce a guaranteed minimum pension.

Conservatives peg back deficit in the polls

The Conservatives have trimmed Labour's lead this month in both opinion polls and the projection based on council election results - with the latest indication that it was not all down to early success for England in Euro 96.

The average opinion poll figure showed Labour, with a 22.5

per cent lead, had slipped 2.5 per cent compared with May, but surveys by NOP in the *Sunday Times* and Mori in the *Times* this week show a 6 per cent drop over the month.

Analysis by Mori suggested the Tory boost could have resulted from a "feel-less-bad" factor after England's soccer triumphs against Holland and Spain. But the evidence from this week's council by-elections shows little sign of a plunge for Mr Major after Wednesday's defeat by Germany.

A projection of 21 comparable results over the month, covering more than 30,000 votes cast, puts Labour ahead by

14.5 per cent, down from 16 per cent in May.

The figure is almost identical for the seven contests that took place last Thursday - despite three Labour seat gains.

The latest indicators put Conservatives above the psychologically important 30 per cent support nationwide.

Crossword

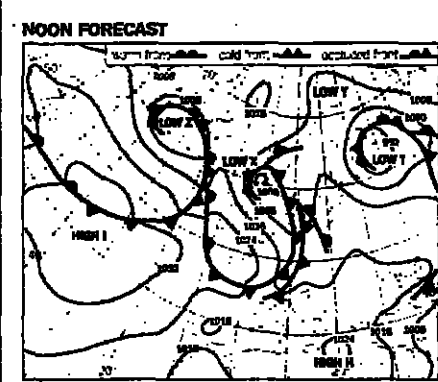
No. 3026 Saturday, 25 June By Simon

1 Across: 1. When life begins? (5)
2. Masticated (6)
3. Whole number (7)
4. Brief (5)
5. Whip (4)
6. Prisoner (7)
7. Avail oneself of (5)
8. Vessel (4)
9. Roman cloak (4)
10. Form of fuel (5)
11. Old king of Mercia (4)
12. State assistance (7)
13. Old king of Mercia (4)
14. Loose (5)
15. Terminal (7)
16. Gesture of greeting (6)
17. Rare gas (5)

1 Down: 1. Weakness (6)
2. Ceremonies (5)
3. Exercise system (4)
4. Areas of high temperatures (3,5)
5. Admonition (7)
6. Make more profound (8)
7. Faint indication (5)
8. Superior (2-6)
9. Piece of luggage (4-3)
10. Distorts (6)
11. Birds (5)
12. Big gun (6)
13. Simulate (5)
14. Breed of cat (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 7. Billed, 8. Incite (Building site), 10. Thunder, 11. Rabbit, 12. Bee, 13. Enact, 14. Order, 15. Felt, 16. Frown, 17. Devised, 18. Laid, 19. Inborn, Down: 1. Abolish, 2. Alumnus, 3. Heady, 4. Unrock, 5. Lamb, 6. Dorian, 7. Orangeade, 8. Whistle, 9. Session, 10. Padding, 11. Affix, 12. Robin, 13. Event.

Weather forecast



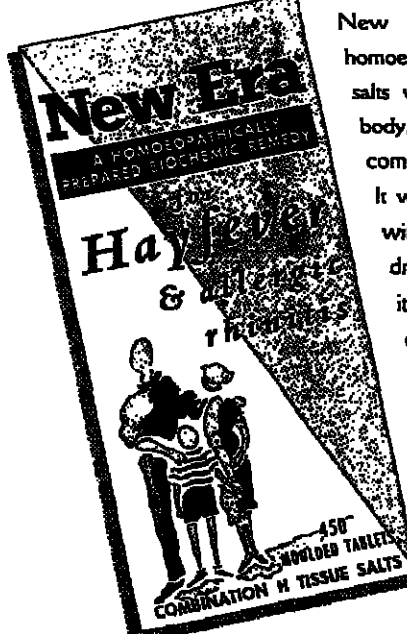
WORLD WEATHER

Country	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Pressure
London	12-14	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Birmingham	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Manchester	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Edinburgh	10-12	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Belfast	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012

INDEPENDENT WEATHERLINE

City	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Pressure
London	12-14	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Birmingham	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Manchester	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Edinburgh	10-12	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012
Belfast	11-13	SW 10	Partly cloudy	1012

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Milligan: 'Came out of blue'

JAMES CUSICK

English hope and triumphalism, sunk in North London on Wednesday night, resurfaced in South West London yesterday. After more than half a century of British famine two home-grown male players walked out on to the Centre Court at Wimbledon, their very presence making redundant the old joke "If they're British it can only be the opening day".

The differing backgrounds of the two contestants, Tim Henman and Luke Milligan, is

a partial success for the Lawn Tennis Association's struggle to attempt to drag their sport out of the safety of the suburban middle classes.

One LTA official, delighted at seeing two Brits centre stage on one of the world's great show courts, said: "They've been looking for another Fred Perry for 50 years. There's been a few Busters, the odd Jeremy, a Roger or two but no Freds."

Henman, 21, as his coach David Felgate believes, "is the genuine article". Wimbledon 96 will take him into the world's

top-ranked 50.

In tennis terms Henman is a pedigree prospect. His great-grandmother Ellen Stawell-Brown was the first woman to serve overseas at Wimbledon, last playing in the women's doubles in 1905. His grandfather, Henry Billington, reached the third round of the men's singles in 1948, 1950 and 1951. Junior Wimbledon was a regular venue for three of his children including Jane, Tim Henman's mother, herself a player regarded as a talented young player.

From the privileged surroundings of Oxford's elite Dragon School to boarding at Reeds Public School in Cobham, Surrey as part of a tennis scholarship Henman has all the credentials of a would-be Fred.

Luke Milligan, still only 19 and ranked 278 in the world, has on the other hand the background that tennis seemed to once ignore.

At 10 Milligan began playing the game at Our Lady of Muswell Hill School club. Instead Milligan is a product of

comprehensive education, fan of Tottenham Hotspur and a devotee of the music of Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix. To relax he plays the drums loudly. But according to Nick Imlison of the LTA: "He came out of the blue to win the U-16 national title."

Unlike Henman there is no mention of tennis in his family tree. His father Jim is a London cab driver and before this week his son's highest pay cheque was £2,000 (Henman's total is over £300,000). Even losing in the third round guarantees £15,900.

After success in the nationals Milligan left school to concentrate on his tennis.

The contrasting backgrounds of Henman and Milligan have stirred the memories of the elderly in tennis's inner sanctum.

One said: "Remember, Fred Perry's initial fame was playing table tennis. He was the son of a northern Labour MP, not very privileged. The toffs at the All England Club didn't like him that much. Nor him them."



Henman: Won \$300,000

The man with the golden touch

STEVE BOGGAN

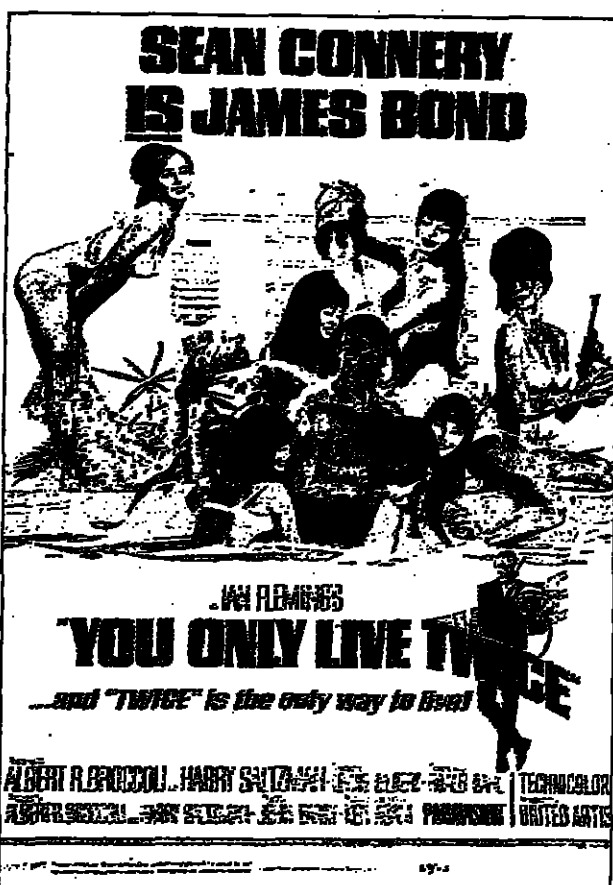
The man who brought Pussy Galore to the screen, gave new meaning to the word "explosion" and made gadgetry the stuff of the big box office died yesterday, not in the violent manner of one of his cinematic bad guys, but peacefully, at his Beverly Hills home.

Albert R. "Cubby" Broccoli, producer of 17 Bond films from *Dr No* to *Goldeneye*, died in his sleep after a series of heart problems. He was 87.

The film world was quick to praise a man whose titles have grossed more than \$1bn in a career spanning 55 years.

Honor Blackman, who played Pussy in *Goldfinger*, said of him: "He was a lovely man. He was always the gentle, kindly uncle of the Bond films. You always felt you could go to Cubby about any problem and he would understand."

Broccoli himself wrote: "From the first I knew Bond was forever." When *Goldfinger*, Broccoli and co-producer Harry Saltzman's second Bond movie, broke all box office



Films that sealed Broccoli's success included *You Only Live Twice* and the latest Bond film, *Goldeneye*. He became the father figure of the people who worked on Bond. Photograph: David James/Sygnia

'Cubby is dancing in the streets... Harry is on the phone doing a deal'

records, an associate told a calling journalist. "Cubby is dancing in the streets... Harry is on the phone doing a deal."

Saltzman, from whom Broccoli split many years later, once described their relationship thus: "We have a kind of chemistry that gets. We fight with the distributors, we fight with the agents, and we fight with each other. We're real professionals."

Broccoli was born in Long Island, New York, the son of Italian farming immigrants.

He moved to Hollywood in 1938 after abandoning life as, first, a market gardener and, later, a funeral director.

His ancestors are credited with breeding the vegetable that bears his name.

His first job was as an assistant director in Howard Hawks' *The Outlaw* at Twentieth Century Fox, but he took more control after moving to Britain in the early 1950s to set up Warwick Pictures with Irving Allen. His first film as a producer was the 1953 *Red Beret*, starring Alan Ladd.

Broccoli's first big break came in 1962 when he and Saltzman persuaded United Artists to provide backing for *Dr No*.

His wife, Dana, is reported to have played no small part in the film's success.

While viewing audition films, she is said to have squealed: "Take that one! He's gorgeous!"

and the career of an unknown actor called Sean Connery was born.

The film was an instant success and it spawned the longest-running sequence of action movies to date.

Among them, making Ian Fleming's character James Bond a worldwide name, were *From Russia With Love*, *Thur-*

derball, *Live and Let Die*, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, and *Never Say Never Again*.

Among the actors who have played Bond are Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, George Lazenby and, most recently, Pierce Brosnan.

Broccoli's company, Eon Productions, said in a statement that he had "passed away

peacefully" at his home in Beverly Hills.

A spokeswoman said he had been ill for some time. She added: "He was very much the godfather, in the best sense of the word, in Bond pictures."

He persuaded Ian Fleming that if he were given the rights to the films they would be in very good hands, and so it's

turned out.

"He was very much the father figure of the people who worked on Bond, from the superstars like Sean Connery to the humble plasterer."

Desmond Llewelyn, who has played gadget expert Q in 15 Bond films, said: "He was a wonderful man, he really was. He was responsible for the real

fantastic success of the Bond films because he was in control."

"There are lots of stories of Cubby vetoing certain things that people wanted, and people grumbling and saying, 'I'm sure we ought to do this or that', but Cubby said no, and of course he was always proved right."

Broccoli was awarded the OBE in 1987 and was also

named Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres by France.

In 1982, he received the Irving G Thalberg Award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which has been held by Alfred Hitchcock, Cecil B de Mille and Walt Disney before him.

He leaves two daughters, a stepson and five grandchildren.

Doubt cast on CJD death

A coroner's verdict that a former abattoir worker with CJD died from natural causes met with disbelief today.

Leonard Franklin, 53, deteriorated from full fitness into a shambling wreck in only seven months because of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a York inquest heard.

But Coroner Donald Coverdale said: "I have formed the view this is a natural disease and my verdict is one of death from natural causes."

Franklin's close friend, Pat Broadhead, said afterwards: "They don't know enough to say that. The big question of how Len caught CJD remains unanswered."

"I don't believe it was a natural death — he really loved his roast beef and had been an abattoir worker. If it was not beef or cattle, what was it?"

Franklin's former wife, Olga, 52, of Alcan Avenue, York, said: "He loved his roast beef and steaks and I'm convinced that is what killed him, together with his work with cattle."

"I think it should have been an open verdict if people were not 1,000-per-cent sure."

A neuropathologist, Dr Leslie Bridges, from Leeds General Infirmary, who carried out an examination on Franklin's brain, told the inquest that he had died from CJD.

It was of the "usual form", and not the new variant, he said. However, it was such a rare disease there was no statistical proof of a link between Mr Franklin's work in an abattoir and the disease.

Dr Bridges said that Mr Franklin's CJD was the only case involving a worker in an abattoir since 1990.

Mrs Broadhead told the inquest: "He loved meat, especially beef. He had an enormous appetite."

She said that he had gradually declined over a period of seven months. At first, he lost his balance and his sense of direction. He became unable to concentrate and suffered from mood swings.

As the months went by, he lost weight and shook uncontrollably until he died at his home in Nicholas Street, York, last February.

Mr Franklin worked at an abattoir for 10 months in 1989 but he was not involved in the slaughter process.

Scientists are still trying to determine whether CJD can be caught by eating beef that might have been infected with BSE. They are also concerned that abattoir workers might be at greater risk of developing the disease.

However, diagnosing CJD is difficult, and usually requires a post-mortem before it can be confirmed.

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news

How the corruption of a trusted policeman was caught on camera by TV programme's investigation

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

John Donald was an experienced, respected police officer with a taste for money. Kevin Cressey an ambitious south London wheeler-dealer. The combination resulted in one of the worst cases of police corruption for almost 20 years.

Donald, a detective constable, was yesterday jailed for a total of 11 years for corruption at the Old Bailey and Cressey received seven years.

The conviction of both men has sent shock waves through the police service and raised worrying questions about a system in which officers are able to obtain confidential information for their own use and manipulate the criminal justice system with apparent impunity.

Since the case involving the Metropolitan Police only came to light because of an investigation by BBC's *Panorama*, there are concerns that more corrupt officers may be operating undetected. It also raises the question - would Donald still be a trusted police officer if it had not been for the media?

Donald's conviction has resulted in significant changes to the management structure of the South East Regional Crime Squad (SERCS), provoked a complete review of informer handling, the investigation of at least eight other officers and the collapse of six cases in which he was involved.

In addition, a major investigation into the activities of two suspects, including Kenneth Noye, who is currently being sought by police for questioning about the M25 road rage killing, has been aborted, and the national telephone tapping unit may have been compromised.



Shady dealings: John Donald, who along with Kevin Cressey, were convicted after a *Panorama* special investigation



The Donald case, stemmed from a raid on a flat in Streatham, south London on 1 September 1992. Cressey, then 36, and David Fraser, the son of 'Mad' Frankie Fraser, the notorious East End gangster, were arrested on drugs offences, which the men deny.

The arresting officers were Detective Constable Donald, then aged 35, Alexander Leighton and Adrian Hodges, from the Drugs Wing of the Number 9 Regional Crime Squad (now part of the SERCS), based in Surbiton, Surrey. They had been tracking Cressey and his associates for six months. Their operation was

code named '009' and Cressey was known as 'India One'. Days after the raid David Fraser, who had only recently completed a 15-year jail term for armed robbery, was bailed. He immediately fled to Spain, where he is still living. His extradition is being sought.

Cressey told police he could supply them with information in exchange for his own freedom. He agreed to become an informer and was, surprisingly, given bail. It later emerged this was due to Donald's intervention, for which he received an £18,000 bribe from Cressey.

Donald was assigned to work with Cressey as his police handler, but instead of obtaining information he soon started accepting more pay-offs, including £1,000 for a copy of Cressey's police file and an agreement worth £40,000 to remove and destroy an incriminating surveillance log.

For £1,000 Donald also agreed to hand on information, via Cressey, to Kenneth Noye, who served eight years for his involvement in Britain's biggest robbery at a Brink's-Mat depot, and Michael Lawson, a London car dealer who was acquitted of his part in the Brink's-Mat crime, about an international police operation involving UK and US drug

agencies. Cressey also paid £500 for sensitive information about surveillance on Michael Lawson. Donald was able to legitimately obtain the confidential information from another Metropolitan Police officer working at the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

It later emerged that Donald was also in possession of confidential information, including details of telephone taps and other material which may have compromised investigations by both the NCIS and other police forces.

A police investigation into the affair is under way, and is understood to have found that

thousands of transcribed pages of telephone taps, including some between Noye and Lawson, had leaked from the unit.

But at the beginning of March 1993, Donald and Cressey's relationship soured. Cressey was charged with a serious offence and he decided to expose his corrupt new friend in the hope of saving himself.

On 22 March he contacted the BBC's *Panorama* team and for the next six months they secretly recorded 14 meetings and conversations with Donald.

The BBC programme 'The Case of India One' was broadcast on 27 September 1993. It showed Cressey and Donald meeting in a car park and money passing between them in a carrier bag.

The police only got wind of the investigation days before it appeared on television, after they were tipped off by American FBI agents. Following the programme, two officers, Detective Sergeant John Bradley from NCIS and Alexander Leighton from SERCS, were arrested and questioned by Scotland Yard's Complaints Investigation Bureau, but no evidence was found against them.

Both are currently suspended from duty on unrelated matters.

Donald was charged with perverting the course of justice and, in November 1995 during his Old Bailey trial, at which the jury were placed under 24-hour police protection, he admitted to four charges of corruption.

Following news of Donald's guilty plea, several people who were in jail contacted the police to claim they had been fitted up by the disgraced officer.

These allegations were investigated by the Police Complaints Authority but none of the complaints were substantiated.



Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman as Woodward and Bernstein in the *Watergate* film, *All the President's Men*

Exposés that put media in vogue

JASON BENNETTO

The conviction of a corrupt police officer is a notable and increasingly rare scalp for investigative journalism.

It took a three-strong BBC *Panorama* team six months of secret recording and researching to nail policeman John Donald and his paymaster, Kevin Cressey. This scale of deployment is unheard of in modern newspaper journalism.

Editors rarely have the resources to spend weeks, let alone months, investigating a story which may not produce a result. They are also worried about the hefty legal costs attached to mistakenly accusing anyone of wrongdoing.

The last major police corruption scandal - the massive clean-out of corrupt Scotland Yard officers in the Seventies - was started by allegations about officers first published in the *Times* in 1969. It was about this time that the *Sunday Times* investigation team was exposing the thalidomide scandal.

Investigative journalism became glamorous in the Seventies with Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward's *Watergate* revelations in the US, which eventually brought down President Nixon. Since then newspapers' desire and ability to produce big exposés has diminished.

There have been a few newspaper successes, such as the revelations about the supergun sale to Iraq and the recent furore over cash for questions in Parliament. And a small group of television and radio documentary makers have taken up the investigators' mantle.

Some investigative reporters, such as Roger Cook, have become celebrities and programmes such as *World in Action*, Channel 4's *Dispatches*, BBC's *Rough Justice* and *Panorama* and Radio 4's *Five to Four* are still prepared to spend their time on lengthy inquiries.

However, these are exceptions. Far more common are the new-style 'tabloid television' inquiries, whose so-called exposés are often little more than a fist full of newspaper cuttings.

Poorly-paid researchers employed by an ever-increasing number of television channels and companies are expected to churn out cheap and cheerful documentaries. These programmes rarely involve any detailed or new research.

The other new development is the crime re-enactment programme. The BBC's *Crime Watch*, and others like it, though successful in helping to catch criminals involve almost all investigative journalism. Such shows are basically glorified police bill boards.

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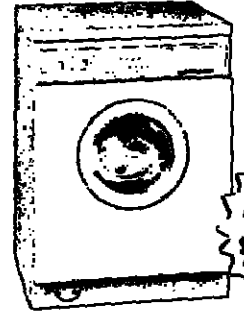
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Lender scraps discounts on first mortgages

JOHN WILLOCK

The end of cheap mortgages with massive first year inducements was signalled this week when a leading lender scrapped its discounts and cash back schemes for first time buyers.

Bradford & Bingley Building Society urged other banks and societies to follow suit.

Societies are finding that offering deep discounts in the first year of up to 6 per cent - enabling customers to enjoy a virtual "freebie" for 12 months - has proved a double-edged sword.

When the housing market was still struggling to recover last year, a 5 per cent discount on the first year of a £75,000 mortgage, cutting repayments to just £100 per month, made sense.

But now more people are moving house, the costs of discounts and cash backs of up to £9,000 are proving too expensive for societies. The Bank of England also believes that these up-front inducements have a dangerous sting in the tail. When a 5 per cent discount ends on a £75,000 mortgage, payments in the second year almost triple to nearly £300 per month.

Deals in danger

First year mortgage deals under threat:
■ Woolwich - discount of 5.41 per cent up to 80 per cent of price for first-time buyers.
■ Abbey National - 2 per cent off on variable rate plus 3 per cent cash back.
■ Bristol & West - 0.95 per cent rate until 30 June 1997 on

loans up to 90 per cent of price.
■ Kinckley & Knight - nothing for new buyers then standard variable rate.
■ Principality - 1 per cent until next July on loans up to 90 per cent of price.
■ Scarborough - 0.75 per cent for first year for loans up to 70 per cent.

The Bank believes many customers will be unprepared for the jump in payments and repossessions will follow.

Bradford & Bingley says it is following advice from the Bank of England, which warned on Thursday that lenders were falling into "some of the traps of the past" by not checking sufficiently that borrowers could afford repayments.

The housing market is showing the best growth since the collapse of the 1980s boom, with prices rising by around 5 per cent a year. Mortgage lending by major British banks rose 21 per cent to £2.5bn in May as a result of an increase in house sales, the British Bankers' Association said.

John Wrigglesworth, director of strategy and communications at the Bradford & Bingley,

said the society scrapped its first year discounts because "we felt we had to take a lead. These discounts are luring customers into a false sense of security. They get a freebie in the first year and then get whacked in the second year. If general interest rates go up as well, they will be really stuffed."

Mr Wrigglesworth expects other building societies like the Nationwide and the Yorkshire to follow suit. He says societies should offer discounts spread over three to five years.

Analyst Rod Thomas of UBS expects the mortgage market to polarise between societies, which will offer cheaper rates to all their borrowers, and banks, which will continue to offer inducements to first time buyers while charging existing borrowers more.



Football memorabilia, including photographs of the 1966 World Cup squad Nat Lofthouse and Sir Stanley Matthews signed by the players, which will be auctioned at Saffron Walden auction rooms next week. Photograph: Brian Harris

Modahl draws first blood in compensation attempt

JOJO MOVES

Diane Modahl yesterday fought off a High Court attempt by the British Athletic Federation to block her damages action.

She will now proceed with her £480,000 compensation claim

for costs incurred in challenging a four-year ban imposed by the BAF after tests carried out in Lisbon in 1994 suggested she had unnaturally high levels of testosterone in her body.

The 30-year-old runner, who was at the High Court with her husband and coach Vicente yesterday, said afterwards she was

"absolutely delighted" with the result.

"It's very important for us to pursue this claim because I have done absolutely nothing wrong. The BAF have obviously forgotten that... and it's important that natural justice is actually done," she said.

Mrs Modahl, who won the

right to Olympic selection two weeks ago, added: "This has not been an ideal way to prepare for the Olympics and Atlanta is now just weeks away. I want to fix my mind on that. The longer this case goes on the more stressful it is for me and my family."

The athlete, who is legally aided, was told that the costs of

day's hearing would be decided at the full trial in the autumn.

The four-year ban was eventually lifted by an appeal tribunal and the International Athletic Federation, after experts cast doubts on the accuracy of the tests. New tests showed that bacterial levels in urine could affect testosterone measurements.

Norway walks out over demand to end whaling

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Norway's delegation walked out of the International Whaling Commission meeting in Aberdeen yesterday when a motion demanding that it cease commercial whaling immediately was debated.

"We wanted to put down a marker," said the country's commissioner to the IWC, Kare Bryn, after leading the walk-out of his delegation. "We're annoyed at the practice of making these 'We hate Norway' resolutions."

Norway defies the IWC's moratorium on commercial whaling, which came into effect 10 years ago. It used its right under international law to make a formal objection, and this summer 31 boats harpooned about 400 minke whales in the north-east Atlantic.

Britain, France and the US wrote yesterday's critical resolution. It was passed with 18

votes in favour and seven against. Mr Bryn left one member of his delegation in the meeting room to vote against the resolution. Afterwards, he made it clear that Norway would ignore the vote, carry on whaling but remain within the IWC.

"There is a debate in Norway about whether we should pull out of the IWC," he said. But the commission was founded 50 years ago to promote the rational exploitation of whale stocks, and Norway was determined to bring it back to its true purpose.

Mr Bryn said that despite his walk-out, Norway had found the Aberdeen meeting the most constructive it had attended in more than a decade. The IWC had accepted an estimate of 118,000 minke whales in the north-east Atlantic - far more than had previously been thought.

Norway says this is a healthy, growing and unendangered population and its hunting quota poses no threat to it.

The meeting also passed a vote condemning Japan's "scientific" whaling, which killed 540 minke whales in the Antarctic and north Pacific in the past year.

Japan formally adheres to the moratorium, but exploits a loophole which allows whales to be killed for scientific research. The meat ends up being traded and eaten in Japan.

Since the late 1970s a majority of IWC member states have been anti-whaling.

James Martin Jones of the World Wide Fund for Nature said: "We are more and more worried at the way in which Japan and Norway are getting around the moratorium, and killing an increasing number of whales."

The whaling ambitions of a tribe of North American Indians also suffered a setback yesterday, when the Makah from Washington State shelved its request to catch five Pacific grey whales a year.

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Russia's luvvies stage show of unity for Yeltsin

TONY BARBER
Moscow

Clowns, wizards, actors, pop stars and Russia's equivalent of Bob Monkhouse are being rolled out by Boris Yeltsin's campaign team in a final effort to ensure the president's re-election next Wednesday.

To cries of "foul" from the camp of Gennady Zyuganov, the Communist challenger, the Russian television and entertainment industry is presenting a united front sending out the message: "Vote for Boris Nikolayevich."

The endorsements from Russia's best-loved luvvies are well-timed, for Mr Yeltsin himself has mysteriously dropped out of sight since last Wednesday, cancelling three campaign trips. His press spokesman, Sergei Medvedev, assured reporters that nothing was amiss, saying the president was "in good form" and had merely lost his voice after a hectic schedule.

In Mr Yeltsin's absence, the job of luring voters has fallen to men such as Yuri Longo, a popular entertainer and self-styled wizard whose bag of tricks includes televised seances and raising the dead from a Moscow morgue. "The election is a huge psychic battle for him and this extra-sensory help is very important," the wizard opined, as he forecast a Yeltsin victory.

Yuri Nikulin, a 75-year-old clown who is one of Russia's most admired circus acts, offered these words of support in a television advertisement: "Nothing human is alien to

him, and that wins my favour." Recalling that Bill Clinton plays the saxophone and that Mr Yeltsin, perhaps the worse for a fipple or two, once seized a conductor's baton and gestured at a military band in Berlin, the clown commented: "Clinton plays sax and our president conducts. I think it's better to be a conductor."

Leonid Yakubovich, the Monkhouse-like host of a television game show called *Field of Miracles*, has joined the Yeltsin bandwagon. Together with a familiar face from Russian television on Sunday mornings, Yuri Nikolayev, he took off to Moscow airport last Thursday in an aircraft covered in banners proclaiming "Yeltsin is Our President".

In an extravaganza funded largely by a pro-Yeltsin advertising agency, Premier SV, the two television personalities are flying to five cities in the run-up to election day and putting on shows for free. "They realise the importance of the current situation," said a Premier SV spokesman, Konstantin Likutov.

In a country where millions are absorbed with star-gazing and the paranormal, something would be wrong if the Yeltsin team had not secured the thumbs-up from a leading astrologer. Cue Pavel Globa, who has publicly predicted a Yeltsin victory "by a few hundred votes" and says that this year's alignment of stars resembles that of 1612-13, when Russia emerged from its politically turbulent Time of Troubles. Aware that the main danger

of defeat lies in a low turn-out on Wednesday, Mr Yeltsin's strategists are encouraging the anti-Communist youth vote with the slogan "vote or lose".

Endorsements have also flowed in from a more conservative sector of Russian society - the Cossacks. With memories still sharp of the persecution they suffered under Soviet Communism, there was little doubt the Cossacks would avoid Mr Zyuganov like the plague.

The unashamedly pro-Yeltsin line taken by Russian state television and most newspapers caused Mr Zyuganov to lodge a complaint last Wednesday with the Central Election Commission about unfair media access. He also challenged Mr Yeltsin to a televised debate, a proposal that the president brushed aside by saying he would not talk with "well-fed party demagogues" and "nomenclature has-beens".



A cyclist in 'tHertogenbosch, the Netherlands, being passed by members of the Once team - including Laurent Jalabert of France (third from left) - after they had taken their medical check-up yesterday on the eve of the Tour de France. Race preview: sport, page 20. Photograph: AFP

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'Hitman' throws Cowboy drugs trial into chaos

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

It was big enough news when a sporting megastar was sent to trial for cocaine possession. Yesterday that trial opened with an even greater bombshell - the arrest of a police officer involved in the case for hiring a hitman to kill Michael Irvin, ace wide receiver of America's most famous football team, the Dallas Cowboys.

The bizarre tale began last March when Irvin was allegedly found in a Texas motel room with two former topless dancers and generous quantities of cocaine and marijuana. He was arrested and charged with drug offences carrying up to 20 years in jail, and Johnnie Hernandez, a much-commended member of the Dallas police force, was subpoenaed to give evidence.

However, Mr Hernandez' participation in the trial is now most uncertain. On Thursday, he was himself arrested and accused of paying \$5,000 (£3,500) to an undercover agent of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration as a downpayment on a contract on Irvin's life.

According to a Dallas police spokesman, Mr Hernandez handed over the money at a meeting with the DEA officer, posing as the hitman, in the parking lot of a shopping mall. He promised to pay a further sum after the murder, which he wanted "to occur very soon".

The rest remains a mystery. The spokesman would give no indication of Mr Hernandez'

alleged motive. He is understood to have been scheduled as a defence witness, to testify about his relationship with Angela Renee Beck, one of the dancers.

Whatever Mr Hernandez's involvement, the stunning turn of events makes it even less likely the Irvin trial will go ahead on time. Even before, his fame was holding up jury selection, as half the prospective jurors identified themselves as Cowboys fans and one said her daughter was "infatuated" with Irvin.

More ominous, perhaps, is the presence of the DEA. Over the last few years, in which Irvin helped the Cowboys to win three out of four Superbowls between 1993 and 1996, several players have been in trouble for drug and alcohol abuse and for mistreating women. That a federal agency is pursuing the Irvin case suggests the DEA suspects an organised drug-dealing scheme for star players.

If convicted, Irvin, 30, could be sent to prison for up to 20 years. "I don't have anything to say," he said on Thursday evening, accompanied by five bodyguards. But his colleague, the Cowboy's legendary running back, Emmitt Smith, said: "It makes you think about things... No matter how tight the security, they got JFK, and they got Bobby Kennedy too." The former of course in Dallas.

As for Mr Hernandez, who resigned from the force after being charged with solicitation of capital murder, he faces a maximum of 99 years behind bars.

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HONG KONG: FINAL COUNTDOWN

China looks forward to levelling the score

JASON BENN

BBC News

China Correspondent

John Donald

When the original agreement

was signed, 1997 seemed far, far

away. Ninety-nine years was

another way of saying "for ever

and a day". In 1988, the signa-

tures perhaps assumed that the

British empire, eternally

strong, would one day simply re-

new the lease. Perhaps, the end

of the 20th century merely

seemed too unreal to contem-

plate. Now, however, the chips

are being called in. A year from

this weekend, the bizarre "yours

today, ours tomorrow" deal

finally comes to an end. The

Union flag comes down in Hong

Kong. China takes over Hong

Kong once more, at midnight on

30 June 1997. It is an event

which was theoretically pre-

programmed a century ago, but

which only now is becoming real.

Until 20 years ago, little

thought was given to the loom-

ing date. Indeed, Margaret

Thatcher hoped, when the prob-

lem was set before her, that there

was some way she could renege

on the deal. She was shocked to

learn that there was not.

In 1984, a sort-of agreement

was reached on the future of the

colony. Only recently has the

pace of change suddenly speed-

ed up as the final handover

approaches. On Tiananmen

Square in Peking, a clock counts

down the seconds till Hong

Kong once more becomes a part

of China. For the mainland

Chinese - including many who

are otherwise critical of the

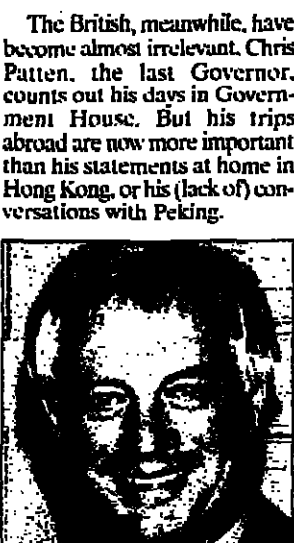
regime - that will be a moment

of pure celebration. For the

Hong Kongers, feelings will be

more than mixed.

Last year of British rule begins this weekend, writes Steve Crawshaw



Chris Patten: Counts his days in Government House

Before the Tiananmen massacre of 1989, the return to China seemed to many Hong Kongers to be a not entirely shocking option. China was opening up, and Hong Kong had been guaranteed that the new deal would provide for "one country, two systems" (this time, with a 50-year time bomb attached: in 2047, the two-systems deal officially runs out). But when the tanks moved down the pro-democracy demonstrators on 4 June 1989, huge crowds

went out on the streets to protest at Peking's actions. Party, these were protests in solidarity. Party, they were protests showing concern for Hong Kong's own future. On the Tiananmen anniversary this month, tens of thousands again demonstrated. Come 1997, the very act of going on to the streets will itself be an act of defiance. A key indicator of Hong Kong's future will be how many are still ready to publicly protest in the weeks before the People's Liberation Army moves in.

Many Hong Kongers will not be especially sad to see the British go. The colonial presence is, after all, a pure anachronism in one of the most modern cities in the world. None the less, the fears of mainland China are real. Those fears are not just straightforwardly political. Over the years, Hong Kong has brought corruption under control. Now, all but the most diehard optimists believe that corruption will increase after July 1997. Indeed, many argue that the corruption which is widespread on the mainland is beginning to make itself felt in Hong Kong.

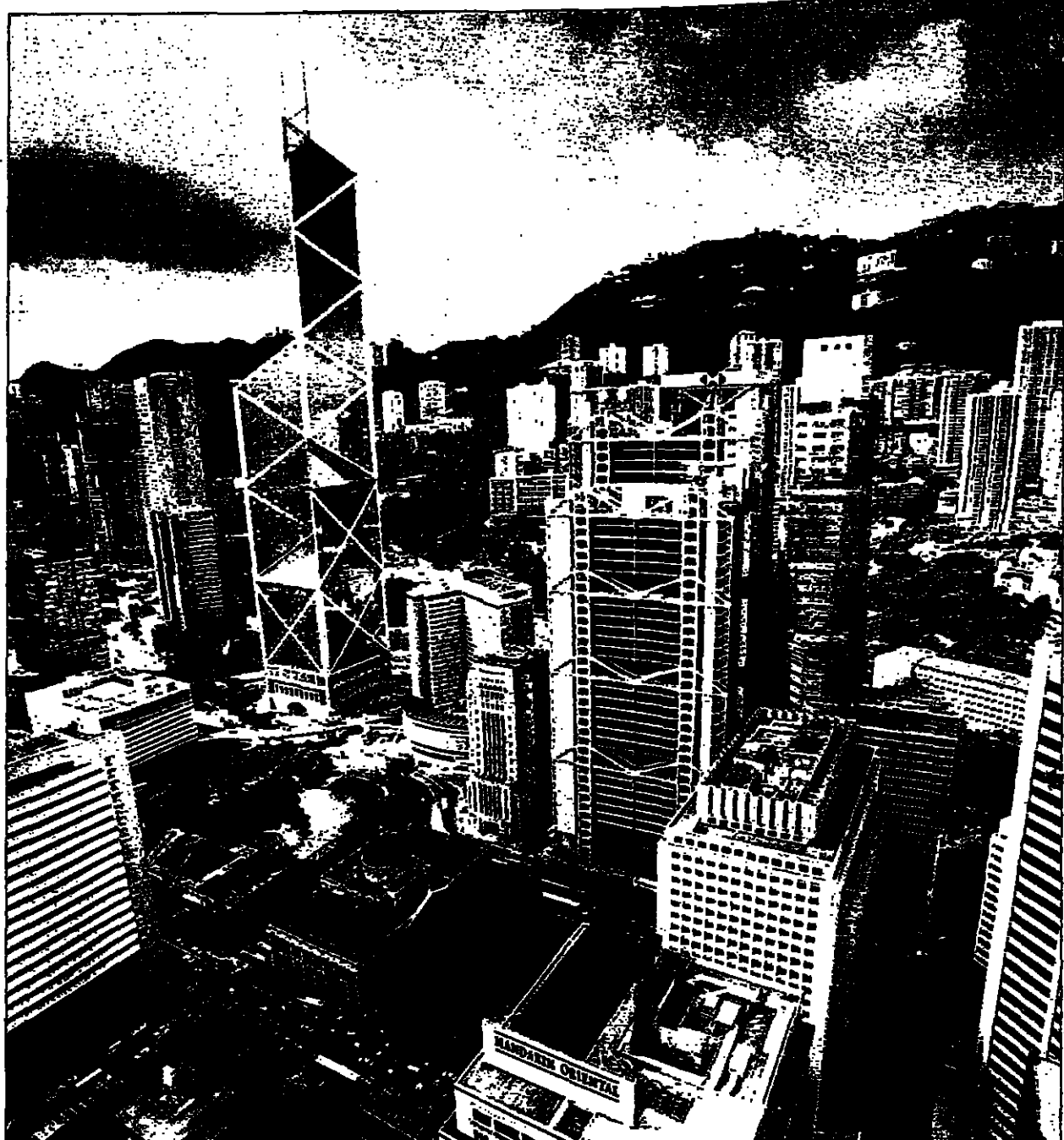
The media, too, have begun to muzzle themselves, in response to veiled - and naked - threats from Peking. On the one hand, the media will be entirely free, says Peking. On the other hand, the press must avoid cer-

tain topics. Faced with such unhappy contradictions, some Hong Kong journalists have concluded that there is little point continuing in their chosen profession after 1 July next year.

In some contexts, confrontation has given way to control as China begins to feel comfortable in the role of master-in-waiting. For years, plans for Hong Kong's new airport were delayed by bitter arguments. Now, the tone has changed: Chinese visitors conduct regular inspections to crack the whip. Peking has begun to regard the airport project as its own: ergo, it must be finished fast.

The majority of Hong Kong businessmen remain friendly to Peking, on the assumption that Peking will be kind to those who make money. Meanwhile, however, the electoral success of the outspoken Democrats, who have been sharply critical of Peking's policies, suggests that ordinary Hong Kongers are not necessarily as indifferent to politics as they are sometimes portrayed. China is determined to freeze the Democrats out of the political. But the policy could yet backfire. If Hong Kongers do protest publicly that might set a dangerously subversive example. If the mainlanders were ever to follow the Hong Kongers' example of going out on the street, then the authorities in Peking might rue the day that they ever pressed for the honouring of the imperial deal.

Leading article, page 11



Sky high: Hong Kong businessmen remain on friendly terms with Peking on the assumption that Peking will be kind to those who make money, but many are worried about the spread of corruption from the mainland. Photograph: John Voos

Britain takes down its symbols and packs up its secrets

STEPHEN VINES

Hong Kong

When the Union flag is hauled down from Government House, just before the stroke of midnight on 30 June 1997, Britain will have had an unprecedented 13 years to plan its exit from the last remaining major colonial possession.

Most of this time has been taken up with issues which do not touch on the withdrawal, leaving an inevitable last-minute scramble to pack the boxes and

sweep the premises clean of incriminating material.

Hardly surprisingly, one of the first really big pieces of hardware to leave was the Asian cousin of the GCHQ electronic surveillance network located on the southern tip of Hong Kong island. In similar fashion, large cases of sensitive Special Branch and intelligence files are already ensigned in London.

The senior local officers who compiled these files are armed with full British passports and can leave at the first sign of trou-

ble. However, the removal of items marked "Top Secret" is the tip of the iceberg.

The transfer of sovereignty requires far more extensive cosmetic and substantial change, most of which will be completed after 1997. At the cosmetic level there is much work to be done to remove British symbols and the royal insignia from everything ranging from stamps and letter boxes to courtrooms and police uniforms.

More substantively, there is

the Herculean task of translating the law into Chinese, of changing the school curriculum to accommodate the incoming sovereign power's view of history and of furnishing the population with new travel documents.

In practically all spheres of life changes will have to be made, and as matters stand it seems that only the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals and the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club intend to cling tenaciously to their existing, and po-

litically incorrect, titles. As there has never been such a long period of planning for the end of colonial rule it may be assumed that matters which were not resolved in other colonies prior to independence would have been settled in Hong Kong.

However, Hong Kong is not "destined for independence" but incorporation into China, and China has yet to shed its distrust of the 6.4 million people it is about to acquire and it refuses to temper its anger against

Britain for introducing elements of democracy to its colony just as it is about to leave.

For these reasons China is busy establishing an alternative political structure explicitly designed to marginalise the outgoing administration and to bar supporters of the democracy movement from having a say in government.

The already isolated Governor, Chris Patten, will find his isolation deepen later in the year when Hong Kong's new head of government, to be

called the Chief Executive, is "elected" by a 400-strong committee hand-picked in Peking.

Candidates for the post are hard to identify because only one serious contender has declared himself to be in the running. The apparent front runner, the shipping tycoon Li Ka-shing, is said to be having cold feet about the job.

It is also likely that China will establish a parallel legislature in the near future which will start enacting legislation ready for the takeover. One of its first acts will

be to shut down the existing, semi-democratically elected Legislative Council.

In Whitehall discussions are under way about whether the royal yacht *Britannia* can be kept aloft to take the Governor out of the colony with his small entourage and, most probably, the Prince of Wales.

Britain wants a full blown leaving ceremony with all the paraphernalia of a departing sovereign power while China has something far more modest in mind.

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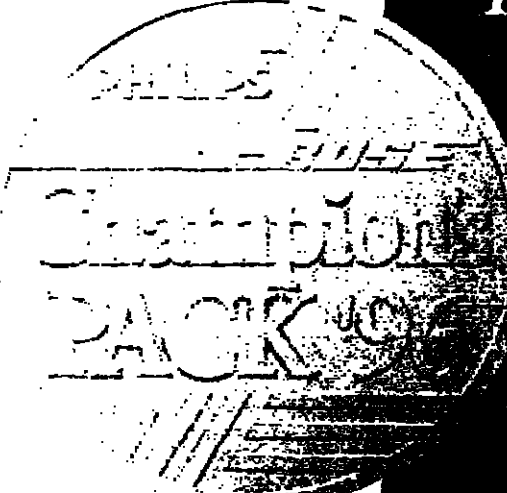
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HONG KONG: FINAL COUNTDOWN

Nationalist call is trump card in patriot game

TERESA POOLE
Peking

The manner in which China's leadership plans to mark 1997 on the mainland reveals the intense official symbolism of Hong Kong's return. Take the publication next year of an *Atlas of Shame* which will detail China's 150 years of abuse at the hands of foreign and colonial powers. Or the huge production under way on the mainland set of *The Opium Wars*, a blockbuster film portraying Britain's greatest historical injustice against China, to be released in 12 months' time. In such ways will the tone be set inside China for 30 June 1997, a day which the Chinese government has said will bring to an end "a long period of bitter suffering and national humiliation".

For some time now, nationalism has already been the rallying call of a government facing difficult social and economic decisions at home. And the build-up to next June will see the hyperbole of patriotic propaganda reach new levels of excess. China "finally" got the international reputation that was its due "when it was agreed that Hong Kong would revert to the mainland, said one recent official commentary. China's resumption of sovereignty will not only wash away this historical stain, providing consolation to our forefathers and those martyrs who devoted their lives to the nation, but will also mark the beginning of a new era for the 'Pearl of the Orient', it added.

On the domestic political stage, President Jiang Zemin will hope that being at the helm for Hong Kong's return will bolster his position as the "core" of the leadership. For the Chinese Communist Party, which on Monday celebrates its 75th anniversary, there is the wishful thought that public discontent over such issues as unemployment and corruption may be diverted by patriotic fervour. And for the People's Liberation Army (PLA), 1997 promises a glorious episode as the mainland

garrison marches into Hong Kong, the only large contingent of mainlanders to take up residence under the "One Country, Two Systems" policy.

All the key players in China will be looking for political dividends from 1997, especially as the handover takes place just three or four months before the next full Communist Party Congress, held once every five years. Behind-the-scenes manoeuvrings have already started, as next year's Congress will decide a new prime minister.



Uncertain future: Mainland Chinese can seem vindictive

However, 1997 also represents a huge risk for Peking. China has repeatedly told the world that the "Pearl of the Orient" will prosper under the motherland, but the world is not yet convinced that China will keep its promise to allow Hong Kong's way of life and freedoms to endure. Peking will have to manage the scrapping of the existing Legislative Council (Legco) and the imposition of an appointed interim alternative. And even if Peking is aware of the damage to be wrought by meddling in Hong Kong's business practices, it remains to be seen if it can rein in powerful provincial officials who have their own designs on a slice of the Hong Kong pie.

Over the next 12 months, China will try to settle people's nerves. But many of its supposed reassurances have a tendency to miss the target. Lu Ping, the director of the mainland's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, recently attempted, for instance, to allay fears about press freedom. Mr Lu said the media could criticise the Chinese government, but would "absolutely not" be allowed to advocate Taiwan independence. A week later, on a visit to Japan, he refined this to mean: "It is all right if reporters objectively report. But if they advocate, it is an action. It has nothing to do with freedom of the press." No one felt very reassured, especially by Mr Lu's elucidation in an interview with CNN television: "Like your country, if some press thinks that Hawaii should be separated from the United States... and somebody advocates another government... will it be allowed? I don't think so," he said.

Many ordinary Chinese profess a desire to visit Hong Kong after 1997, and most assume that this will be possible. "It should be easier then to visit Hong Kong," said Liu Zhang, 30, a business administrator, voicing a common misconception. In fact, after 30 June 1997, there are supposed to be strict border controls between Hong Kong and the mainland, and no entry without a Hong Kong-issued travel permit.

Talking about Hong Kong to mainlanders, especially in the north, a streak of vindictiveness is discernible. Hong Kongers have, over the past few decades, enjoyed a much higher standard of living and avoided the political turmoil of the People's Republic. "Now Hong Kong will be under the control of Peking, and the time has come for mainland people to share the benefits of Hong Kong," said a government cadre. Patriotism also has its emotional limits. One engineering graduate voiced a common sentiment: "I do not like Hong Kong people, because they look down on mainlanders."



City lights: Hong Kong has enjoyed a much higher standard of living than the mainland over the past few decades. 'The time has come for mainland people to share in the benefits,' one government cadre said. Photographs: Magnum

'Barren island' that bore fruit

STEPHEN VINES

Britain has always been ambivalent about its acquisition of Hong Kong during the opium war of the mid-18th century.

It was occupied by a naval force on 26 January 1841, but such was the lack of enthusiasm that Captain Charles Elliot, who was responsible for its seizure, was chastised by Palmerston for his lack of vigour in getting more out of the Chinese. Describing it as a "barren island", he raged: "You have disobeyed and neglected your instructions."

However, in 1842, the Treaty of Nanking was signed yielding the island of Hong Kong in perpetuity. In 1860, as Peking was occupied by the British and French, the garrison in Hong Kong decided it needed some space for exercises, as a result of which the Kowloon peninsula on the mainland and the tiny Stonecutter's Island joined the Empire.

The colonial appetite, however, remained unsatisfied and by 1898 the biggest slice of Chinese land - the New Territories - was ceded to Britain as part of a European land-grab throughout China. It is the 99-year lease on the New Territories which expires a year from tomorrow: Hong Kong island, ceded "in perpetuity" is the heart of the colony's prosperity, but cannot survive without its hinterland.

In the years leading up to the Second World War, Hong Kong was a relatively poor, dowdy sort of place, much overshadowed by the glamour of the internationally bustling Shanghai.

After 1945, other colonies began to think of independence, but Hong Kong was more worried by the threat of Chinese occupation. The 1960s overspill of the Cultural Revolution provided a reminder of what might happen, but by the end of the 1970s the picture changed with the first opening of China's economy laying the foundations for Hong Kong's prosperity.

China indicated its desire to resume sovereignty over the colony informally in 1979 and formally in 1982. An abrasive meeting between Margaret Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping set the tone for two years of negotiations leading to the Joint Declaration which laid the basis for the transfer of sovereignty.



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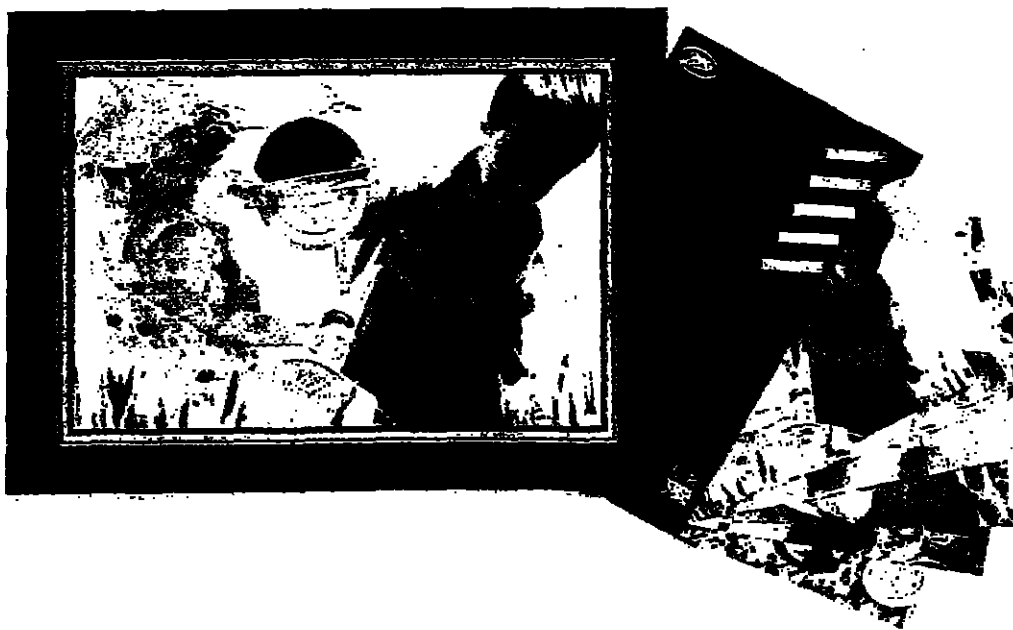
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Islamic leader takes the reins in Turkey

Yet even Turkish secularists are doing little more than tut-tutting Erbakan's slow march to power. Since Turkey's last real government collapsed nine months ago, public opinion has become punch-drunk with unprincipled politicking, revelations of public corruption and a new upsurge in nationalist sen-

Mr Erbakan has already signalled that he will compromise on some foreign policy issues and has said he might sacrifice his opposition to a customs union with Europe and the 'Operation Provide Comfort' force protecting the Kurds of northern

Despite Turkish denials, the accord appears to be strongly targeted at Syria. Mr Erbakan, however, professes great love for Syria and the Arab world and a dislike of American imperialism, so it seems likely there will be a cooling-off period in official aspects of the Israeli relationship.

He will, however, be in complete accord with pursuing the military's 12-year-old fight with the Kurdistan Workers' Party.



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After empire, we badly need a new refrain

In a year's time, the union flag will be lowered for the last time over Hong Kong. The implications of Chinese rule for the Colony itself are momentous, but the event ought to have deep significance for all of us in Britain, whether or not we have eaten a Chinese meal. For when that scrap of fabric runs down the flagpole, the imperial experience will come to an end. Our excuses for failing to adjust and fashion an up-to-date and lasting national self-identity will have run out.

Empire will not quite be exhausted. Britain will be left with a handful of flag-end dependencies: a clutch of islands in the Caribbean, some scattered on the vast open waters of the South Atlantic, a few in the Pacific, a cluster in the Indian Ocean, Bermuda, Gibraltar, and the unpopulated expanse of British Antarctic Territory. But Hong Kong, with nearly six million people, is the last plot with any economic importance. London once ruled some 400 million people. As late as the 1950s, British school-children could truthfully be told the sun never set on the Commonwealth/Empire. As from the first of July next year, Britain's remaining possessions will encompass some 160,000 people, roughly the population of the Isle of Wight.

Next year will also see the 50th anniversary of Indian independence, the beginning

of the end of Empire. The handover of Hong Kong will coincide (almost to the day) with the centenary of the extravagant celebration of Empire bound up with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Ninety-nine years ago, so Jan Morris tells us in her Empire trilogy, they sang in Happy Valley. They won't be raising their voices in celebration in 1997.

Will these coincidences thicken the contemporary mood of fractious patriotism, at least in the part of Britain that is England? The end of Empire has not been a political question for a long time. Yet it could and perhaps should excite attention – and precipitate long-needed debate about national role and purpose.

Inside a century, an empire spanning a quarter of the globe has disappeared. John Seeley said the British acquired their empire in a fit of absence of mind; they disposed of it with even less attention. Outside the Indian subcontinent, the liquidation has been relatively untraumatic, unbloody. Of course, there was armed struggle in Kenya. Blood was shed in Cyprus, Aden and elsewhere. Often independence came agonisingly slowly – as it seemed to colonised and coloniser alike. Yet the process produced no Angola or Congo or Algeria. For the colonial power in that instance, France, the end of empire left deep, domestic scars.



France is the European country with which Britain has most in common in its imperial history; their Dien Bien Phu was a national catastrophe. Algeria destroyed the Fourth Republic. We have nothing to compare. Rhodesia was painful, but on nothing like the same scale. In just 50 years, we have left it all behind us, and the very ease (some would say indecent haste) with which we packed our bags meant we have thought about it all the less.

But there are consequences. Britain has never quite been at ease with itself in the world since – or should that read "England"? Perhaps the end of empire has yet fully to register inside the United Kingdom: perhaps the settlement of empire entails settling relations between England and the other countries. Meanwhile, the British state and its representation to the wider world has been confused. Dean Acheson famously remarked that Britain had lost an empire but not yet found a role. Nobody thanked him for saying it in 1962, yet it remains a truism of foreign policy in 1996. The character part which Britain took in the drama of the Cold War gave reassurance, but even that has gone now.

It is not as if we have not had time to inure ourselves to reduced circumstances. Kipling saw the writing on the wall in 1897. "Lo, all our pomp of yesterday: Is one with

Nineveh and Tyre," he wrote in *Recessional*. One response has been retreat, a kind of inner migration – ignore the world and cultivate our gardens. Another has been the desire to march through the councils of the world, stamping our feet and demanding that everyone else snap to attention. We cannot quite shake the imperial habits of mind. Here are elements of psychosis, as reactions to *Euro 96* have shown. Victory made some English people mad with arrogance, while defeat left them full of self-hatred.

In England, it sometimes seems we can only sing two songs: Rule Britannia, or an English Country Garden, as if we were still fighting those old battles between the Imperialists and the Little Englanders that raged a century ago. We badly need to find a new refrain.

British people know the reduced economic and political facts. Hearts have to accept lower-tier membership of the international community. Yet Britain remains a global player. We are, for the most part, a diligent and responsible member of the international community. This is a less stirring, less vivid thing than empire. But is a better thing and, even when the flags come down in distant parts and there are tugs in British hearts, none of us now thinks otherwise.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sale of MoD married quarters will bring benefits

Sir: I was astonished to find myself reported in your columns (report, 26 June, first edition) as a former defence minister who had "rejected" the MoD's plans for the sale of the married quarters estate to the private sector.

The truth is the exact opposite. While Minister of State for Defence from 1992-94 I strongly championed the scheme which has since been refined, safeguarded, and improved by Michael Portillo. The sad fact of this matter is that the management of Service housing has been poor for many years.

The status quo is virtually indefensible because of the unacceptably high number of

empty houses, houses in poor condition, and dissatisfied occupants complaining of inadequate maintenance and service.

The Portillo plan benefits both taxpayers and Service families. The latter will gain because £100 million from the sale proceeds will be spent on upgrading married quarters. The result will be that the living conditions of most Service houses will be raised to Grade One standard within about five years, an achievement which would be unattainable without the sale.

So far as the wider defence interest is concerned, it is important to emphasise that cohesive Service

communities will be preserved and that a Ministerial veto is being retained to prevent the sale of any properties which might impair operational effectiveness. Like the Chiefs of Staff, I supported the proposal when a defence minister because it satisfied the interests of the Service.

Backbench opponents of the scheme may have axes of their own to grind, but they will be doing no favours for Britain's Services or taxpayers if they vote against Michael Portillo's admirable plan.

JONATHAN AITKEN MP
(Thames South, Con)
House of Commons
London SW1

Rid Britain of nuclear weapons

Sir: The launch of Labour's defence manifesto for the next election is a terrible lost opportunity ("Nuclear responsibility is awesome," says Blair, 26 June). The manifesto, in one line, says Labour is still committed to a nuclear free world. However, it fails to say how it intends to help achieve this, and Tony Blair completely omitted this commitment from his press statement, saying only that Labour would press for reductions in nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

According to Mr Blair, a Labour Government would only enter British nuclear forces into multilateral negotiations "when satisfied with verified progress towards our goal of the global elimination of nuclear weapons". Yet it has been repeatedly demonstrated, that the continued failure of Britain to place Trident on the negotiating table has contributed to the quarrels in evidence at the

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty talks in Geneva. The arrogant insistence that Britain should hang onto its nuclear weapons simply because it has them will antagonise non-nuclear countries and potentially galvanise threshold states into deploying their own arsenals. If the nuclear party is set to go on, then what is to stop other countries from joining in the fun?

If Tony Blair thinks that playing macho games with humanity's survival will make him popular with voters, he is wrong. He may think that being prepared to push the nuclear button will help win the next election. However, a clear 50-60 per cent of the British electorate now favour a Britain without nuclear weapons, and want to see a treaty ridding the country of them.

JANET BLOOMFIELD
Chair, CND
London N7

Preventive aims of Child Safety Week

Sir: There seems to be some confusion over the aims of Child Safety Week. We read with interest the two letters (27 June) which give the impression that "less than 700" accidental child deaths are somehow acceptable. Perhaps that statement could be put to a parent who has lost their child to an accident.

We agree absolutely that children shouldn't be over-protected. The Trust has never, at any point, encouraged parents and carers to over-protect their children from everyday risks, denying them the chance to learn to cope with hazards. We do believe in preparing children for adult life by teaching them to deal with risk for themselves, through education and experience.

The type of accident that does concern us is the serious, life-threatening and preventable type. If you knew that by installing a smoke alarm today, it would give you precious extra seconds to escape a fire, you'd fit one. If you were aware

how much damage a car windscreen does to an unrestrained toddler in a crash, you'd use a properly fitted car seat. If you realised how quickly and silently a young child can drown in just a few inches of water, you'd make sure you emptied that paddling pool or garden pond.

The last thing we want to do is spoil children's – and parents' – enjoyment of family life and growing up. But it's hard to imagine what could spoil a family's happiness, more than a serious injury to or death of a child.

Statistics show that 2.5 million children will go to Accident and Emergency Units after an accident during the next 12 months. Many thousands of these injuries will be serious and potentially life-threatening and nearly 700 families will be bereaved. This is what the Trust hopes to prevent.

CAROL SHERKIFF
Director
Child Accident Prevention Trust
London EC1

A devilishly good actor

Sir: I was interested to read in Paul Valley's report (25 June) of Fr Gerard McGinnity's tortured gymnastics as he celebrated Mass in the House of Prayer on Achill. It seems from the report that many of his followers ascribe his agitation to the frenzied efforts of the devil to upset him. May I set their minds at rest. As a student for the priesthood at Maynooth in the 1970s, when Fr McGinnity was Dean, my most enduring memory is that he was a reasonably good actor who could never resist the exaggerated gesture.

The Rev KEVIN HEGARTY
Belmillet, Co Mayo

Sir: St Paul's Pharisee colleagues most probably regarded him as having been "massively destabilised" by his experience on the road to Damascus. How else can we see the mental processes by which Fr McGinnity's sometime seminarist colleagues dismissed his "massive conversion experience" in Medjugorje as "massively destabilising"?

Genuine conversion – which all of us, including lecturers in seminars probably need – leads to fundamental change. How could a basic reappraisal of attitudes, values and actions not be destabilising of all that needs to be changed?

MARY SMITH
Rugby, Staffordshire

The follow-up that could be written

Sir: In principle I dislike the idea of sequels by other hands ("Follow-ups that can't be written", 26 June). But David Lister is not quite correct in saying that "Dickens has, so far, been avoided by the sequel writers."

Sir Harry Johnston, the explorer and writer, who died in 1927, wrote sequels to *Dombey and Son* and *Mutual Friend*, entitled *The Gay Dombey* and *The Venerables*. It is a long time since I read them: they pursue the fate of some Dickens characters and their descendants against a late Victorian background.

JAMES N DAWSON
London SE26

Sport in question

Sir: What is this rubbish about exercise making children happy (report, 28 June)? My happiest moment at school was sulking out how to avoid games. I realised that it is almost impossible to force an adolescent to take part in games – what sanctions do you impose on someone who prefers to be kept in working?

My proud boast is that I've taken no exercise since 1957. At 57 my only problem is hayfever – somehow I don't think compulsory sport would have averted this, but I am thinking of taking up smoking...

JUDY WATSON
Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire

LETTER from THE EDITOR

The reassuring thing about editing is that the difficult decisions turn out to be ethical ones, or at least about values in a general way. This is how it should be. The biggest problem coming up for us here may be the Sophie Hook murder case – the sex-murder of the seven-year-old girl who was snatched from a garden tent.

It seems clear that the evidence will be lengthy and horrible. My preference is to avoid most of the evidence, covering the main developments in the case in an episodic rather than daily way, and steering clear of the nasty bits. This time, that's what we will do.

But plenty of my colleagues think this is plain wrong: we are a newspaper and should report all the facts, no matter how unpleasant.

They have a point: many readers, however much they shudder, want to know everything there is to know about such crimes. And sometimes, the telling detail matters or resolves some important unknown. The Fred and Rosemary West trial, Dunblane, the Bulger case – these could not have been properly reported without some terrible stuff.

So there is no point in telling you that we have an answer for, or a formula to, what has become almost a weekly dilemma. If not yet a daily one. If anyone has suggestions or strong views about it, I'd be glad to hear them.

One of the unexpected events of the week was breakfast with one Dr Henry Kissinger, who regaled the company with his views on Russia, Asia and European integration, not to mention the quality of leadership on offer in Washington.

He is still someone visited by senior foreign leaders from across the world and probably has better access to their thinking than any other single individual. But why was he in London? A big international conference? A private confabulation with Major and Clinton? Well, not exactly. As a fervent soccer fan, Dr K was here for the footie.

Another American visitor was Ben Bradlee, the former *Washington Post* editor and veteran

of Watergate who is a member of our board. He spent time yesterday in the newsroom, regaling us with political gossip and reflections on the trade. He tends to be described as "the legendary Ben Bradlee", a tag he hates. "A legend in his own mind," was his sardonic response.

Returning to the football, here is a message for everyone who was offended by last Saturday's front-page piece about General Robert Venables, the "womanising, drunken rat" who was defeated by the Spanish in the 1650s. Our headline may have led some people to

'You put a gun on the front page to call for a ban on firearms; a boot there for the football. What when the next parliamentary sex scandal breaks?'

think we were referring to the saintly Terry Venables instead. Well... all right, that was the idea. It seemed funny at the time. To me, it still is. But since this is *The Column What Tells It Like It Is*, let me confess that the "drunken rat" headline may, just conceivably, have been a little over the top. The person responsible (me) has been severely rebuked by the editor.

In the same edition, we had a life-sized picture of Alan Shearer's boot, referring, in advance, to the England-Spain match. At a splendid Oxfordshire party that night – and what a state we were all in the next morning – the following unanswerable challenge was posed: "You put a big gun on the front page to call for a ban on domestic firearms; you put a big boot there for the football. My question is, what are you going to do when the next parliamentary sex scandal breaks?" No answers on a postcard, please.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

If I'd known I was going to live this long I would have taken better care of myself – **Bob Monkhouse**, on reaching his 68th birthday.

If Major fails at the next election, my phone stops ringing. But he won't – **Peter Friel**, a much-sought-after John Major look-alike.

I like to go swimming somewhere where nobody will see me. I have a marginal seat and it wouldn't be wise if people saw me with my clothes off – **Jeremy Hanley**, *Foreign Office* minister.

Eating meat rather than incinerating it would save an awful lot of money better left in the taxpayer's pocket – **Nicholas Budgen**, *Tory Euro-sceptic*.

If you were John Major with a majority of one, would you really want to take this warring, unpleasant, back-stabbing, back-biting crew through another six months of dark winter nights in the House of Commons? – **Paddy Ashdown**, *Liberal Democrat* leader, on the prospects of an autumn general election.

New Labour is an ageing transvestite clad in sub-Thatcherite rhetoric. We know that Danny La Rue is a man, just as we know that New Labour is old Labour – **Tristan Garel-Jones**, *Tory MP*.

"Why didn't you just belt it?" – **Barbara Southgate** to her son Gareth after he missed the penalty in the *Euro 96* semi final against Germany.

Charges do not deter museum visitors

Sir: I wish Charles Saumarez Smith well in taking the National Portrait Gallery's bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for its new extension (report, 25 June), but I cannot let his comments on visitor numbers to museums go unchallenged.

Charles Saumarez Smith claims that those museums that charge for admission have suffered large decreases in visitor numbers since doing so, and cites an alleged drop in the number visiting the Natural History Museum from 3.35 million per year before charging to 1.06 million now: a fall of 68 per cent. As far as the Natural History Museum is concerned, these figures are not "public knowledge" as he claims, but part of public mythology.

In the years before the Natural History Museum introduced admission charges, it simply did not count visitors accurately as they came into the Museum. Annual visitor numbers were estimated subjectively, usually by extrapolating from a few periods of peak visitorship, and were as a result, greatly inflated. An annual visitor count of 3.35 million would have meant an average of over 9,000 visitors every day of the year that the Museum was open. We know from the accurate counts we make of visitors as we issue them with tickets that when 9,000 people visit us in a day, the Museum is packed, with barely room to move. It is clear that it would have been physically and operationally impossible for the Museum to have received 3.35 million visitors a year in the past, or anything remotely approaching this number.

The figure of 1.06 million that Charles Saumarez Smith cites as the current figure is quite simply wrong. The true figure for last year was 1.46 million of which 1.06 million paid admission charges, the remainder coming in without charge, either during the free period at the end of each day, or in organised school parties.

Since the Natural History Museum introduced admission charges in 1987, its annual visitor numbers have fluctuated year by year from 1.4 million to 1.75 million, and I suspect this is very much the level of visitor numbers during the decade before charging.

Dr NEIL CHALMERS
Director, Natural History Museum
London SW7

Superiority complex

Sir: Bryan Appleyard writes (comment, 27 June) that "the English are, stereotypically, arrogant and superior" – he is mistaken. It is the French who are superior, the Germans inferior, while the English simply think the world owes them a favour.

TOM KENYON-SLANEY
London W6



Brigitte Bardot: her beauty was a gift from her genes

The value of beauty without jealousy

Sir: The relationship between personal appearance and life chances is a little more complicated than Rebecca Fowler suggests ("Is it really such a sin to be ugly?", 27 June).

Most of the important empirical research was carried out in the 1960s when a welcome new honesty and frankness were entering into the once almost taboo subject of looks. But the distinguished American social psychologists Dion, Berscheid and Walster added to persisting confusion when, for feminist political reasons, they entitled their report of 1972 (*Journal of Personal and Social Psychology*, vol 24, pp 205-90) "What is beautiful is good".

What their research, and a critical mass of other studies actually showed, was not that people equate

beauty with moral good, but with something very different, worldly happiness and success.

Historically there have always been jobs in which men could profit from beauty – as a footman, or as a salesman in a department store catering for women, for instance.

Today there are more and more sales and media jobs in which appearance is an indispensable asset. But a beautiful face does not make a brain surgeon (or a professor of history).

Beauty is simply a gift from our genes: valued because it gives joy to all beholders, a gift just like musical or mathematical talent. If we understand this, we can value it without jealousy, and avoid overvaluing it.

ARTHUR MARWICK
London NW3

Red herring of the West Lothian Question

Sir: The West Lothian Question is the reddest of red herrings (comment, 25 June). There is no such thing as a Scottish MP, an English MP, a Welsh MP or an Irish MP. An MP is an MP – nothing more and nothing less. He or she is not a delegate but an MP in his or her own right, with a duty to exercise responsible judgement on any issue coming before the House of Commons.

DRUMMOND HUNTER
Edinburgh

Sir: There is a solution to Labour's worries about the so-called "tartan tax". They could make the extra tax raised by the Parliament allowable against national Income Tax. In effect that would mean a transfer of resources to Scotland from the national budget for specifically Scottish services under democratic Scottish control. That is surely what devolution is about.

ROLAND FREEMAN
Salisbury, Wiltshire

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. (Fax: 0171-293 2856; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

the commentators

DAVID
AARONOVITCH



A bird in the hand

A picture, a photograph of three people. On the left is a woman, just short of middle age, wearing a white cardigan, a knee-length pleated skirt. On her head, she is either wearing a bonnet, or else her beehive hairdo has partially collapsed.

On the right is a boy of about 13, in a checked jacket and open-necked shirt. The woman, who has very white teeth, is smiling at something. It is a large parrot being held on his outstretched arm by the boy. And behind the parrot is John Major. Tall, short-back-and-sides emphasising his high forehead, a 1960s suit, a shirt whose whiteness matches the woman's teeth, highly polished shoes and a small smile - on his lips, he looks out on us from over the parrot. The only other

town is a perfect place to listen to idiosyncratic English spoken recreationally, rather than the more formal language of the office, factory or school. Their dress is staid because their trip is for a semi-serious purpose. The camera, we must surmise, is being wielded by the woman's chauffeur and chaplain. When he has taken the picture, they will walk together to a "fish and chip" establishment, there to sample traditional British food - and to be instructed in the arcane arts of condiment deployment.

But we are still left with the parrot. Is it a family pet, brought over from Leroc or Sidon despite draconian quarantine regulations, and taken everywhere by its devoted owners? Or does it belong to John Major himself, a useful prop for

provoking discussion with his pupil ("Now Ahmed, tell Polly where you've been today - in English, please.")

Knowing what we do of Mr Major's subsequent career, we might guess that, in the mid-Sixties (before media training was invented), a parrot could come in handy for an aspirant politician to practice with. A competent parrot might cope quite easily with "I refer the honourable gentleman to the answer I gave earlier."

I believe, however, that the bird must be more symbolic than this. Almost certainly, it has a sexual significance. Held in front of our future Prime Minister, it signifies a cockiness, an upright feathery confidence. What, after all, do parrots do? They squawk - and they peck. So a parrot is, in a quite literal sense, a pecker. And a large parrot suggests (let us not beat about the bush) a large pecker. When we know - as we now do - that the woman, Jean Kierans (mother of 13-year-old Kevin), was in fact John Major's lover, then everything - their parrot, his smirk and her smile - becomes clear.



And the mouse roared 'U-turn'

Labour has gone back on its pledge on devolution. Scotland is outraged, says Ian Bell

Sometimes you wish politicians wouldn't do you favours. In Glasgow on Thursday, for example, Gordon Brown was explaining how a referendum on Scottish devolution would "bury forever the black Tory lie that a tax-raising parliament would be imposed on the people of Scotland against their will". Very decent of him.

The trouble is, however, that according to every opinion poll this particular inky Tory fib is already six feet under. Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth's assault on the "tartan tax" has made absolutely no impact on Labour's dominance in Scotland. Why, suddenly, the fuss?

It was no less strange - downright spooky, in fact - to hear that Labour's putative "low-tax chancellor" intends to campaign to give fiscal powers to an Edinburgh parliament, powers that would be a mockery of his taxation policies in the United Kingdom. That such powers would also affect the good folk of Dumfries and Galloway, whom Mr Brown represents, only added to the confusion.

It is possible that ignorance explains all. In advance of Tony Blair's courageous (aren't they always?) visit to Edinburgh yesterday, his people were telling London newspapers that the Scottish media - whose reaction to the referendum plan has mixed disbelief with outrage - are "out of

touch". That's us in our place, then. But our place, in every sense of the word, is the problem. Politically, Scotland is a place in which our English neighbours show little interest, and one which they understand less. Our dissatisfaction with our place in the British scheme of things is something they understand least of all.

Scotland doesn't fit; it is anomalous, from its quaint legal and education systems to its quixotic refusal to embrace Conservative government. It has a political culture and a set of aspirations - with home rule at their heart - entirely of its own. This week Blair's team set out to knock Scotland into shape while proclaiming - but this is the clever part - their complete understanding of how different Scotland is.

Bear in mind that a referendum is the one idea Labour has rejected consistently and vehemently, for years. From shadow Scottish Secretary George Robertson down, the party has argued that a Labour general election victory is the only endorsement a tax-raising parliament requires. Now we hear that Robertson has enjoyed a Damascene conversion. Cinders shall go to the ball, but only if she votes for it in a referendum. Moreover, it is to be a two-part plebiscite, first to accept the parliament itself, second to clarify its fiscal powers. Sainly Scots are to be asked how much they love taxation.

The louder the denials grow, the clearer it becomes that Blair knows exactly what he is about. The tax question, it is said, will "shoot Forsyth's fox". But in Scotland the fox isn't running. The referendum will spike Major's guns as he tries to turn the Union into a crusade. But what John Smith called the "settled will" of the Scots is perfectly clear - and besides, if Labour's thinking on the constitu-

Cinders shall go to the ball, but only if she votes for it in a referendum

tion is so persuasive, why doesn't Blair stand by it, and fight the Scottish issue as a manifesto commitment?

Interestingly, Blair's belief in devolution did not extend to consulting the majority of his Scottish MPs over his new wheeze. Even John McAllion, supposedly Scottish spokesman on constitutional affairs, was kept in the dark. But then McAllion, who has now resigned, was long suspected of being a shade too keen on home rule. He might have made a fuss.

Fuss, in general, is what the hierarchy hopes will soon pass. They should be so lucky. The suspicion is

that Blair is finessing a near-sacred commitment (John Smith's "unfinished business") simply to keep the issue off the general election agenda, and to ensure that devolution, if it comes, will be a trivial affair. Some, this writer included, believe a repeat of the 1979 referendum debacle would actually suit him. At the very least, he wants out from under the commitment to taxation powers.

Blair, we suspect, has gazed upon the Scottish anomaly and repented. How about all that extra identifiable (and forget the rest) expenditure Scots get? How about the over-representation of Scottish MPs (perpetually outnumbered) at Westminster? What of the West Lothian question, the prospect of Scots voting on English affairs when English MPs (the ones who gave Scotland a year of its very own "purely" Scottish poll tax) can no longer legislate on Scotland?

But these are English concerns. British fears. Scotland wants greater control of its affairs. Labour gave a solemn promise that this would come to pass and now Blair has, to be very polite, amended the pledge. Yet the policies of Scotland offers no motive for doing so. The only real explanation is that the Labour leader feels incapable of defending the Scottish claim before an English electorate. There's a lot of English nationalism about all of a sudden, is there not?

Therefore he postpones the whole business until after an election. There will be a parliament, but nothing too serious. Edinburgh will resume its historic place among the great local authorities of the world and the union will be renewed and reborn, or some such think-tank twit.

But really? Yesterday Blair was in the Scottish capital to knock heads together and once again show us (the guts of which, famously, he has so many. Let us try to read these pink entrails.

Labour wins the general election, though not by a huge margin. At the speed of light (say six months?) a referendum is held. Blair to us the country explaining why devolution is nature's sovereign remedy, and why his cast-iron chancellor sees no problem, in logic or in principle, in reconciling his fiscal reticence to an Edinburgh parliament with the right to levy additional taxes.

The parliament goes through on the nod but barge-poles decline tax-raising powers. Scotland says "Yes" and "No". Someone wonders whose bright idea all this was in the first place and Scottish Labour lapses into tribal warfare. Some then drift off to the SNP, which suddenly looks like a rather good bet for elections to the Edinburgh parliament.

And one fine morning Prime Minister Blair wakes up, too late, to a real Scottish problem.

Ian Bell is a columnist on the 'Scotsman'.

Hanoi's wrinkly rulers are not for retiring

Vietnam's leaders are still mentally at war, says Raymond Whitaker

You can't accuse them of not seeing the problem clearly. "Forces hostile to socialism," says the political report to the eighth congress of Vietnam's Communist Party, "demand the exercise of capitalist-style human rights and democracy, demand a depoliticisation of the state apparatus [and] press for a pluralistic and multi-party system with a view to stripping the party of its leadership role."

And what are these "forces hostile to socialism"? Well, the party's experiments with *doi moi*, or economic renovation, for one. As the report admits, market economics "contains aspects which are contradictory to the nature of socialism."

The cadres assembled in Hanoi have to decide what to do about it, but one look at them tells you how difficult it will be to find the answer. They have no more in common with one another than do the inhabitants of Hanoi, where traditional conical hats and solar topees are still worn, with the silk-clad, mobile phone-wielding people of Ho Chi Minh City. The new Politburo contains an uneasy mixture of Communist warhorses and would-be entrepreneurs: unable to agree on any changes, they have reconferred the ruling triumvirate - Do Muoi, the party secretary, President Le Duc Anh, and Vo Van Kiet, the Prime Minister, all over 70 - in their posts.

The foreign businessmen who have poured into Viet-



The gerontocracy still rules in Vietnam. Photograph: Reuters

nam since the US lifted its embargo believed that the country would be the next Asian economic tiger. Any people hard-working and tough enough to see off the French, the Americans and the Chinese in the space of three decades had to be a good bet, they reasoned. And it is true that the economy has grown rapidly in recent years, raising living standards sharply from their previously abysmal levels. But investment is beginning to tail off, and doubts are growing. Not only is the party's appetite for inter-

ference and control undiminished - in a pre-congress campaign against "social poisons", advertisements for many Western products were obliterated or removed - but corruption is endemic.

According to a recent survey carried out by a Hong Kong-based consultancy, proportionally more Vietnamese have their hands in the till than anywhere else in Asia. Next comes China, whose Prime Minister, Li Peng, is a guest at the congress, and where the *People's Daily* came close to admitting this week that the

concentration of power in a few hands made corruption inevitable. Like the Vietnamese, the Chinese know well enough what is wrong. It is just that both Communist regimes reject the obvious solution: giving their citizens the right to choose their own leaders. China has always been simply too big for the centre to maintain absolute control, but in Vietnam it is easier, which in turn makes a decision by the party to loosen its grip all the more agonising to take.

The cartoonist Gary Trudeau has been having fun lately in his *Doonedbury* strip with a US veteran's inability to come to terms with the present. He returns to Vietnam full of wary defensiveness, only to find the locals completely uninterested in denouncing him - they are too busy wheeling and dealing. But you could make the same jokes about the country's Communist hierarchy, who often seem equally out of sympathy with the desire of ordinary Vietnamese to get on with their lives.

Having fought so many enemies for so long, much of the leadership in Hanoi remains imprisoned by a war mentality. In this sense, they have more in common with the hairy veterans who hang around the Vietnam war memorial in Washington, peddling their conspiracy theories about Americans still being held in jungle POW camps, than they do with their younger countrymen.

Football's bitterest pill

William Hartston swallows hard data with disappointing results

Football, even before the events of Wednesday night, was responsible for nearly a sixth of the disappointment in this country and more than a fifth of all the bitter disappointment. Over 57 per cent of the national hooliganism is also football related. These are the inevitable conclusions of my computer analysis of the past three years of a cross-section of national newspapers. The figures make sobering reading: Of the 18,828 articles including the word "disappointment" in this vast database, no fewer than 3,126 also contained the word "football". Of the 594 cases of "bitter disappointment", 120 were football related, and of the 1,150 people who have been "bitterly disappointed", football was the implied cause in 267 instances.

Still worse, for every fish that has been gutted (159 in total), there have been more than three gutted footballers (484 altogether). Gutted buildings, however, (518) are still ahead of the footballers.

Surprisingly enough, though, of the 2,699 parrots referred to, only 434 have been sick, and perhaps even more astoundingly, of the 3,342 penalty shoot-outs, only 345 have been dramatic.

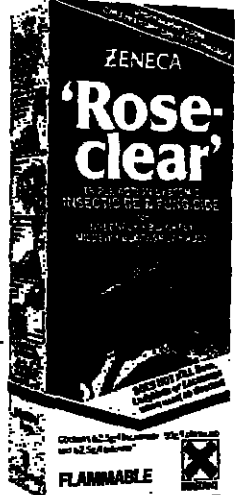
Off the field, we have seen 3,255 yobs (of whom 713 have had football connections) and 8,088 thugs (1,222 of whom are football-related). The hooligans, however, have made the game their own with 1,904 out of a total of 3,329 practising

their hooliganism in a footballing context. Thugs are certainly more vicious than yobs or hooligans - one in 14 thugs is a vicious thug compared with one in 25 yobs and one in 27 hooligans - but they are considerably less ugly (one in 40 compared with one in 29 and one in 26) and less mindless (one in 40, one in 24 and one in 27 respectively for the three groups).

The most significant figures, however, appear when we investigate the connections of mindlessness and football. Of the 1,976 "mindless" incidences, 356 occurred in close proximity to the word "football", and of those 356, there were 55 mindless yobs, 76 mindless thugs and 86 mindless hooligans. In other words, while football attracts only one in three of our mindless thugs, and two out of every five of our mindless yobs, it is the natural home for more than 70 per cent of our mindless hooligans.

Is our national sport just unlucky to attract such people? The figures do indeed confirm that football attracts more than its fair share of bad luck. Of the 8,313 occurrences of the word "unlucky", 1,415 were in a footballing context, and one in 22 of those was "desperately unlucky". By comparison, cricketers were unlucky only 660 times and desperately unlucky on only 20 occasions. This shows that an unlucky footballer is 50 per cent more likely to be desperately unlucky than an unlucky cricketer. A bitterly disappointing result for football followers.

PRODUCT WITHDRAWAL NOTICE



'Roseclear'

A regulatory reclassification following a recent routine review of data on potential eye irritation by the Government's Pesticide Safety Directorate has led to the withdrawal of approval for the sale, supply and use of the garden product 'Roseclear'. Both ZENECA Agrochemicals, the manufacturer of 'Roseclear', and its UK distributor immediately ceased supplying the product to the market and are withdrawing it from use.

'Roseclear' has been the leading product for control of pests and diseases on roses and other plants for more than 10 years and is characterised by the absence of adverse effect on bees, ladybirds and a number of other beneficial insects. The issue of eye irritation relates solely to the possible risk of undiluted 'Roseclear' concentrate being accidentally splashed on the eye. Pack labels have always warned of this and, since it was launched in 1982, 40 million applications of 'Roseclear' have shown a maximum of 4 reports of such problems and no other risks once the product is diluted for use (300 parts water to 1 part 'Roseclear').

No other products are affected.

The withdrawal notice means that 'Roseclear' is no longer approved for use by amateur gardeners. A freephone helpline has been set up for gardeners with advice on safe disposal of the product by 18th December 1996 - the date set by the Government.

A separate freephone helpline has been set up for retailers.

'Roseclear' Helpline for Gardeners: 0800 118822

'Roseclear' Helpline for Retailers: 0800 119922

ZENECA

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Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING		DOLLAR		D-MARK	
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	3 months
US	15278	5-3	9-4	1070	0-658
Canada	2201	11-3	50-7	13567	2-0
Germany	2895	48-4	100-10	15222	2-4
France	12693	102-10	323-34	81483	26-27
Italy	1247	162-16	568	10389	75-75
Spain	2404	75-20	225-28	10880	48-44
UK	22017	5-11	46-40	12654	7-8
Belgium	48679	34-32	213-30	84-4	18-48
Netherlands	25522	56-76	167-65	14755	20-20
Ireland	10256	7-3	33-14	64585	35-32
Norway	12550	10-10	61-55	4-7	12-12
Sweden	7121	10-10	32-22	7-7	10-10
Switzerland	10240	0-4	1-9	163537	263-20
Australia	12434	54-48	185-152	37-34	176-157
Japan	2011	20-11	127-16	12716	54-51
Hong Kong	10217	101-11	224-70	74-68	1-35
Malaysia	38771	0-0	2-4563	0-0	60-40
New Zealand	21581	0-0	14536	0-0	14536
Saudi Arabia	1979	0-0	37525	0-0	3-4
Singapore	441	0-0	1476	41-30	102-85

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Starting	Dollar	Country	Starting	Dollar
Argentina	15921	05967	Nigeria	12529	61080
Austria	16544	10127	Oman	05965	03691
Brazil	15806	10042	Pakistan	54403	35000
China	125334	83221	Philippines	417361	26350
Egypt	52763	33899	Portugal	26143	16670
Finland	72330	45466	Russia	15650	9540
France	55600	16400	Saudi	766233	50700
Greece	39158	24030	South Africa	67329	43330
India	547367	25290	Taiwan	428077	575450
Kuwait	04659	02998	UAE	57084	36731

Tourist Rates

E Steps		E Steps		E Steps	
Australia(Dollars)	18680	France(Francis)	77000	New Zealand(Dollars)	22000
Austria	335500	Germany(Germans)	2225	Norway(Norway)	98000
Belgium(Francis)	463000	Greece(Greeks)	3645000	Portugal(Portugals)	2260000
Canada(Dollars)	20550	Hong Kong(Dollars)	10800	Spain(Spanish)	517500
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.705	India(India)	0.9435	Sweden(Swedish)	102000
Denmark(Danish)	69400	Italy(Italy)	2255000	Switzerland(Swiss)	18700
Finland(Finnish)	24450	Japan(Japan)	1000000	Turkey(Turkey)	12000000
France(Francis)	22625	Malaysia(Malays)	0.6550	United States(United States)	15000

Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base	575%	Discount	Discount
France	Lombard	Prime	Discount
Interest	Canada	Discount	Discount
to	Prime	and Funds	250%
Discount	90%	Spots	Central
Netherlands	Discount	3-Day Repo	Switzerland
Advances	Denmark	Sweden	Discount
	Discount	Repo (Net)	Lombard
			425%

Bond Yields

Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %	Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %
US	77%	227	74%	209	Netherlands	6%	3.6	6%	6.6
UK	625%	638	59%	574	Spain	103%	103	103%	103
Japan	561%	521	31%	35	Italy	111%	679	105%	105
Australia	87%	89	85%	84	Belgium	101%	583	7%	676
Germany	538%	554	625%	628	Sweden	97%	6%	6%	6%
France	57%	554	725%	628	ECU DFR	97%	589	74%	584

Money Market Rates

	O'Night	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	5	6 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	6 1/2
Saving CDs	5	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
Local Authority Depts	5	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
Discount Merchant Depts	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
Treasury Bills (90 Day)	5	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
Dollar CDs	5	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
ECU Linked Depts	5	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2

Liffe Financial Futures

[illegible]

Liffe FT-SE Index Option

Settlement price: 3700.0	closing offer price			Call/Put
Series	3650	3700	3750	3800
July	68/19	36/38	15/66	4/07
Aug	67/41	67/62	35/60	19/24
Sep	11/64	82/84	59/111	40/142
Oct	130/76	101/86	77/124	56/154

Commoditi

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange					
Spot/one	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks	chg
Aluminium HG	1700-72	1520-065	36556	065700	+ 352
Aluminium Alloy	1230-05	1250-45	632	04880	+ 240
Copper A	2035-10	1982-65	54221	232325	+ 7800
Lead	735-54	701-02	0919	93330	+ 1625
Nickel	7700-55	7700-65	16375	3425	+ 52
Tin	8355-60/65	8355-30	5465	3720	+ 335
Zinc	9142-35	9142-35	15430	37000	+ 450
Silver/one ounce	73	73 1/4	24		

PRECIOUS METALS		Prices as at
Unit	Price	10/10/83
Gold (1000g)	10,000.00	10,000.00
Silver (1000g)	1,000.00	1,000.00
Palladium (1000g)	10,000.00	10,000.00
Platinum (1000g)	10,000.00	10,000.00

Item	Q	£	Coins	Q	£	Q	£	
Patagon	388.35	251.35	Britannia	400	259	Kruggerand	374.88	242.50
Patellum	322.35	85.45	Britannia 5 oz	202	20	Sows	82.94	57.81
Silver spot	5.03	3.24	Britannia 25 oz	132	66	Nobles	333.99	248.58
Gold Bull	382.25	246.00	Britannia 10 oz	53	34	Maple Leaf	385.400	242.50

Source: Scott & Son

AGRICULTURAL

Cocoa

[illegible]

May	Matro (No.3) ^{***}	5
July-Aug	Copra (1)	1

[illegible]

COMMODITY INDICES

Index	Base date	%Sppl	%Dry cng	Dec 31st	%W to dry cng	Year ago	% Yr cng
Agri	1975=100	232.09	+109	202.00	-5.99	175.05	+54.5
Agricultural	1975=100	291.71	-291	291.75	-0.03	245.49	+47.3
Energy	1965=100	71.98	+2.01	71.31	-0.60	56.92	+26.3
Foodst & Metals	1977=100	101.70	+0.68	93.32	-1.59	20.77	+17.7
Investment	1975=100	186.58	+122	182.71	-1.73	123.66	+49.0
Precious Metals	1975=100	484.53	-0.4	488.66	-2.67	501.37	-3.96

100 Largest Insurance Funds

[illegible]

business

THE INDEPENDENT • Saturday 29 June 1996

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2095

Market Report: Resolute half-term marks
Unit Trust Prices

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Hotel deal paves way for Lonrho split

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Dieter Bock made an important breakthrough yesterday in the rebuilding of Lonrho, the former Tinsley Holdings, by buying back a one-third stake in the company's Metropole hotel chain from Muammar Gaddafi's Libyan government. Mr Bock said the \$389m (£250m) deal meant that a proposed three-way split of Lonrho later this year, leaving off hotels and African trading operations from the company's mining core, could go ahead.



Poison pill neutralised: Dieter Bock's (left) buy-back of Muammar Gaddafi's Metropole stake unshackles Lonrho



Mr Bock said a traditional demerger of the three businesses, which would have handed shares to existing Lonrho shareholders, had been shelved because of tax complications in many of the countries in which Lonrho operated. Instead, the hotels and trading operations will be sold off, by the year-end, in public offerings of shares.

Lonrho to Anglo American, the South African mining group, which has an option over the shares.

He will reinvest some of the proceeds in the African trading business and plans to head up the new company.

That would give Anglo, which earlier this year bought a 6 per cent stake in Lonrho from Mr Rowland, the former chairman, a near-25 per cent holding in the rump mining operation, whose biggest asset by far is a shareholding in the separately quoted Ashanti Goldfields.

It acquired the shares, and the option over Mr Bock's holding this year, after a proposed mining merger with Genor was blocked by the European Commission.

Other senior executives from

Lonrho will also transfer to the African trading business after the split, and the company will probably take the Lonrho name, in effect creating a "new Lonrho". The rump Lonrho will have no equity interest in the trading or hotels operations following the transactions.

Lonrho is paying the Libyans \$389m for the Metropole stake, removing a poison-pill holding that was widely seen as preventing a planned flotation of the hotels operation.

The price was struck by adding a notional rate of interest to the \$307m the Libyans paid for the shares in 1992.

Analysis think the hotels operation, which includes the British Metropole chain as well as the American-based Princess hotels, could be worth up to

\$800m. The African trading operation has a price tag of about £500m on it, although analysts admit that its collection of agriculture, motor import, property and manufacturing businesses are hard to value accurately.

Mr Bock said he plans to have a stake of between 20 and 25 per cent in the African operations, which might include some or all of Lonrho's African hotels and possibly the Mondo oil and gas business in the US.

He described the African trading company as a unique vehicle for institutions to gain an exposure to the growing economies of Africa. Emerging market funds are expected to be among the new company's largest shareholders.

The hotels operation is ex-

pected to benefit from a buoyant hotel market as occupancy and room rates continue to recover from the industry's deep recession in the early 1990s.

Recent hotel company flotations have all moved to early premiums. News of the proposed changes at Lonrho accompanied interim figures, showing a 15 per cent rise in pre-tax profits from £52m to £60m. Earnings per share increased from 3.2p to 3.7p and a maintained dividend of 2.25p will be paid.

Borrowings, which Mr Bock said he hoped the flotations would almost completely remove, were £579m.

Lonrho's share price, which reached a low of 59p after the sale of the Metropole stake in 1992 closed 3p higher at 185p.

£1m pay bonanza sparks new row at Grid

MICHAEL HARRISON

A fresh pay storm erupted at the National Grid yesterday after it emerged that one of its directors is in line for a £1m pay and perks bonanza under a new share option scheme unveiled yesterday.

Mike Grabiner, chief executive of the Grid's telecommunications subsidiary Energis, will be entitled to share awards worth four times his £200,000-year salary provided certain performance targets are met. Five other Energis directors, including finance director Chris Hibbert, are in line for share awards worth three times their earnings. The Grid defended the share option scheme, saying that Energis was operating in a competitive market and that significant incentives needed to be put in place this year to stimulate performance.

Mr Grabiner and Mr Hibbert were recruited at the beginning of the year from BT to help bolster the fledgling telecoms operator. Losses at Energis rose from £53m to £73m last year and it is not forecast to break even until 1999-2000 when sales are expected to have grown to £400m.

The Grid is also in talks, however, to sell off a stake of up to 49 per cent in Energis with AT&T, the giant American telecoms group, among the likely bidders. The Grid, bitterly criticised last year for the huge sharewindfalls directors netted from its flotation, has also introduced a new share scheme for its main board executive directors.

Chief executive David Jones and four other directors will be eligible for free shares equivalent to their annual performance bonus this year provided the bonus is invested in shares for three years.

Mr Jones stands to pick up a maximum bonus this year of £70,000 which would be matched by free shares. In 1995-96 he received total pay of £248,000 including a performance-linked bonus of £53,000.

The highest-paid director was the Grid's chairman, David Jeffries, who received £253,000 including a £73,000 bonus.

Eric Chefnere, who retired early from the post of engineering services director, received £204,000 in pension contributions in addition to £147,000 pay for the nine months to 31 December 1995.

Group of Seven summit: Leaders agree to work on increasing relief for poorest countries but skate over detail

Third World is given vague pledge on debt

MARY DEJEVSKY
Lyon

The leaders of the world's richest nations agreed yesterday to work for an increase in debt relief for the poorest countries and to tighten world trade regulations to discourage unilateral action by individual countries.

But the two decisions, con-

tained in the economic communique presented by President Jacques Chirac of France on behalf of the Group of Seven industrialised countries meeting at their annual summit in Lyon, were couched in general terms and skirted over important points of disagreement.

The prominent place given to development aid and debt in the

communique satisfied the desire of the host country, France, and Japan to focus attention on help for the least developed countries. Britain and the US were also satisfied by the emphasis on assistance linked to the development of free market economies and encouragement for private enterprise and the exercise of financial discipline, which accompanied every mention of aid.

The G7 also set out a series of proposals for reforming and rationalising UN organisations connected with foreign aid, including the appointment of a single under secretary-general to handle development. The move seemed intended to sideline a dispute between the US and European countries about whether the current UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, should serve a second term.

A key point of discord in preparation for the summit, however, the question of whether the IMF should set a small part of its gold reserves to fund additional debt relief, was referred to only obliquely - and immediately interpreted differently by several of the participants. The communique said only that "if needed, the IMF should consider optimising its reserves management" to help finance the debt relief programme.

A later paragraph said that the G7 welcomed the World Bank undertaking to commit \$500m to increasing debt relief and would support and work together for an overall World Bank contribution of the order of \$2bn.



All smiles: Presidents Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl at the start of yesterday's G7 session Photograph: Reuters

The American treasury secretary, Robert Rubin, interpreted this as meaning that \$2bn worth of gold reserves would be sold. The British Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, also indicated that gold sales were likely. Germany - whose finance minister, Theo Waigel, failed to turn up for yesterday's meetings because his plane broke down - had stood out against any gold sales, and reportedly brought Italy and

Japan over to its side. Britain and France had proposed a compromise solution under which the proceeds of the gold sales would be invested to ensure they retained their value. Yesterday's communique pleased Washington by avoiding any specific mention either of the US or Helms-Burton, but issued what the EU officials described as a firm reprimand to the US.

Separately, Russia's long-standing hopes of joining the

Group of Seven receded yesterday when President Chirac said the G7 was essentially an economic grouping "which is used to working together" and Russia's economy did not meet the requirements for membership. Mr Chirac was speaking soon after the arrival of the Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, to take part in the second part of the summit, which is devoted to political issues, including Bosnia.

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Sweet £7m of notes for Pitcher & Piano player

NIGEL COPE

A former Rolls-Royce aerodynamicist netted £7m yesterday when his chain of seven Pitcher & Piano theme bars was sold for £20m to Marston, Thompson & Eveshead, the regional brewer and pub group.

Crispin Tweddell, 49, started the Pitcher & Piano chain as a single bar in Fulham West London in 1986. Yesterday Marston said the bars would provide a retail brand to match its Pedigree ale.

Marston hopes to double the number of Pitcher & Piano bars to 14 with outlets in Islington, Newcastle, Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds and Edinburgh.

The deal underlines the high value of themed or branded pubs and restaurants. It follows a similar bout of corporate cheque-waving last week when

Greene King paid nearly £20m for the Magic Pub Company, a group of mainly S&P pubs founded by Michael Carron.

Mr Tweddell has made his fortune via the Piper Trust, his investment vehicle which also owns Cranks & Winkles restaurants. The trust's venture capital group also owns a stake in the Sofa Workshops furniture chain and Pied a Terre, a group of fashionable shoe shops. He will stay on as chairman of Pitcher & Piano.

The Pitcher & Piano is aimed at trendy 18-35-year-olds with a relatively high disposable income. With an emphasis on quality design and a high level of comfort, the bars include stripped wood floors, waitress service food, sofas and the obligatory grand piano. Mr Tweddell, 48, who used to work at the Fitch and Wolf Olin design consultancies, says he

hatched the idea as a way of moving away from the notion of the old-fashioned boozer. "We could see people were not happy with what was on offer. Men went to pubs and women went to wine bars. The bars were intended as a kind of home from home with a simple selection of drinks. None of this palaver with wine lists."

The venture proved a terrific success, riding on the back of the yuppie boom but continuing to prosper through the recession. In the year to June 1995 the chain made profits of £830,000 on sales of £5.4m.

This year it expects to make £1m profit on sales of £7.7m. Mr Tweddell is already dreaming up his next venture. Called Dream and Do, it will be a gardening catalogue with telephone-based ordering. He hopes to get the concept off the ground next year.

C&W chairman defends compensation payouts

Brian Smith, chairman of Cable & Wireless, yesterday defended compensation payouts to two former directors and insisted C&W had no intention of "dumping" its Mercury Communications division.

Speaking at the company's annual meeting, Mr Smith said the payments to former chairman Lord Young of Grafham and former chief executive James Ross, were "what they were due to that point". He described the terms of three months' pay plus their share option entitlements as standard.

The two directors, who were asked to leave the company in November, were reportedly offered compensation of £2.4m and £1.3m respectively. "Leaving emotion aside, I believe this was a fair settlement for two people who had worked hard and successfully for the company and who had left it in ex-

cellent financial shape," Mr Smith said. He was also quizzed by one shareholder on why incoming chief executive Dick Brown was immediately granted an option package worth an estimated £2.6m.

He replied that the deal was "the sort of incentive package required to get a top-level executive from the US to come on board". Mr Brown takes up his post on Monday.

Mr Smith said that in Europe, its majority-owned Mercury Communications had come back strongly from its disappointing year in 1994/95 and while there was more work to be done, the results "are now coming through". He denied speculation that C&W wanted to "dump it". "It remains a cornerstone of our European strategy and Europe continues to be one of our main areas of focus."

On the break-down of recent merger talks with BT, Mr Smith said the board had a clear duty to shareholders to investigate the proposal but it became clear "the obstacles were intractable and that the lengthy discussions were blocking some of the other options we wished to pursue".

Cable & Wireless said reports that the company is considering a stake sale in majority owned Hong Kong Telecom to the Chinese were "purely speculative". A Hong Kong newspaper had yesterday quoted a "senior C&W source" as saying the company would consider selling part of its 57.5 per cent holding in HK Telecom to the Chinese to help secure better access to the Chinese telecoms market. Mr Smith said that despite the upsets and excitement of the 1995/96 year, the true picture was one of solid growth.

STOCK MARKETS					
FT-SE 100		Dow Jones		Nikkei	
1995	5711.00	1995	8237.10	1995	15639.50
1996	5711.00	1996	8237.10	1996	15639.50
1997	5711.00	1997	8237.10	1997	15639.50
1998	5711.00	1998	8237.10	1998	15639.50
1999	5711.00	1999	8237.10	1999	15639.50
2000	5711.00	2000	8237.10	2000	15639.50
2001	5711.00	2001	8237.10	2001	15639.50
2002	5711.00	2002	8237.10	2002	15639.50
2003	5711.00	2003	8237.10	2003	15639.50
2004	5711.00	2004	8237.10	2004	15639.50
2005	5711.00	2005	8237.10	2005	15639.50
2006	5711.00	2006	8237.10	2006	15639.50
2007	5711.00	2007	8237.10	2007	15639.50
2008	5711.00	2008	8237.10	2008	15639.50
2009	5711.00	2009	8237.10	2009	15639.50
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2019	5711.00	2019	8237.10	2019	15639.50
2020	5711.00	2020	8237.10	2020	15639.50
2021	5711.00	2021	8237.10	2021	15639.50
2022	5711.00	2022	8237.10	2022	15639.50
2023	5711.00	2023	8237.10	2023	15639.50
2024	5711.00	2024	8237.10	2024	15639.50
2025	5711.00	2025	8237.10	2025	15639.50
2026	5711.00	2026	8237.10	2026	15639.50
2027	5711.00	2027	8237.10	2027	15639.50
2028	5711.00	2028	8237.10	2028	15639.50
2029	5711.00	2029	8237.10	2029	15639.50
2030	5711.00	2030	8237.10	2030	15639.50

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling*			US medium gov†			US long bond			
1M	5.75	5.8	1M	6.5	7.0	1M	7.0	7.5	
3M	5.75	5.8	3M	6.5	7.0	3M	7.0	7.5	
6M	5.75	5.8	6M	6.5	7.0	6M	7.0	7.5	
1Y	5.75	5.8	1Y	6.5	7.0	1Y	7.0	7.5	
2Y	5.75	5.8	2Y	6.5	7.0	2Y	7.0	7.5	
3Y	5.75	5.8	3Y	6.5	7.0	3Y	7.0	7.5	
4Y	5.75	5.8	4Y	6.5	7.0	4Y	7.0	7.5	
5Y	5.75	5.8	5Y	6.5	7.0	5Y	7.0	7.5	
10Y	5.75	5.8	10Y	6.5	7.0	10Y	7.0	7.5	
15Y	5.75	5.8	15Y	6.5	7.0	15Y	7.0	7.5	
20Y	5.75	5.8	20Y	6.5	7.0	20Y	7.0	7.5	
25Y	5.75	5.8	25Y	6.5	7.0	25Y	7.0	7.5	
30Y	5.75	5.8	30Y	6.5	7.0	30Y	7.0	7.5	
* 10% tax on interest received † Treasury 10/28									
Money Market Rates			Bond Yields *						
	1 Month	1 Year	1 Month	3 Month	1 Year	Long Bond	(%)	90 Day	(%)
UK	5.75	5.81	7.90	8.06	8.01	7.48			
US	6.93	6.94	6.32	6.22	6.91	6.63			
Germany	2.47	9.69	3.15	2.75	-	-			
Denmark	3.25	2.60	6.61	6.99	7.06	-			
Benchmark indices									
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
Currencies	Price	Change	% Change	Falls	Price	Change	% Change		
Securities	262	17	6.8	Structured P/ice	36	3	7.7		
Asian/Bosph	2463	119	4.9	7.8.1	140	6	5.6		
Japan	329	14	4.3	DorSant	109	9	2.7		



COMMENT

'It is hard to know, what, if anything, should or can be done to halt the ever-upward spiral of executive pay. To attack it through the taxation system would only undermine incentive as well as driving some of our best high-earning talent offshore'

How Greenbury has boosted executive excess

It is as if the Greenbury Committee on top of executive pay never existed. This is the season of annual accounts and in all but a few rare instances, their pages faithfully record that executive salaries and perks continue to motor upwards, in many cases at a rate of knots. True, disclosure has generally been improved by the Greenbury recommendations, but if the idea was that this would shame remuneration committees into paying their executives less, then Greenbury has failed in its purpose. There is not the faintest glimmer of restraint. If anything the effect seems to have been rather the reverse.

By exposing the excess of a few, greater disclosure has tended to drag up the rest. Nor is the phenomenon confined to the boardroom, many executives claim. When the directors of often quite small publicly quoted companies are revealed to be paying themselves so handsomely, it is hard to resist the demands of larger company executives who, though only running divisions and subsidiaries, are none the less responsible for much bigger organisations.

Paradoxically then, enhanced disclosure seems also to be raising "the going rate". The evidence of this is not just anecdotal: it is also confirmed by the statistics, which show the number of top earners (£100,000-plus) growing as never before. In a period of widespread wage restraint, low inflation and very considerable corporate downsizing, you might expect the reverse to be occurring. Some executives attribute the fault in all

this to the new disclosure rules themselves. Without Greenbury, it is claimed, there wouldn't be all this inflationary benchmarking of salaries and perks. Tish. The implication of this argument is that the tide of excess could be held back by keeping the privileges of the few secret from the rest. In the modern world such obfuscation would be as unacceptable as it is unrealistic.

Even among the privatised utilities, which sparked the "fat cats" row in the first place, there is little evidence of any change of heart. True, the unreconstructed share option schemes which made many utility bosses into overnight millionaires, are on the whole disappearing. Since water and electricity share prices have already enjoyed most of their upside potential, however, their demise hurts no one. Instead, new and even better wheezes are being devised - the long-term, performance-related bonus being the most apparent. Take the one revealed in the National Power accounts earlier this week. According to the small print, executive directors can hope to boost their base salaries by 50 per cent through short- and long-term bonus schemes by showing "sustained, solid, relative performance". Er... this might sound a bit old-fashioned but it is that not what salaries are meant for? It would appear that National Power directors are not doing much just for doing the job.

The package available to National Grid directors is in some respects even worse. The share option scheme has gone, to be replaced by executive bonuses which - and this is the good bit - if invested in National Grid shares is doubled by the company in the form of an equal and opposite number of free National Grid shares.

Nor have the rewards of outright failure or worse been much damaged by the turgid and largely pointless meanderings of the Cadbury and Greenbury committees. True, Peter Robinson, former chief executive of the Woolwich building society, dropped his claim for compensation but he still walked away with a lump sum and pension that many would kill for. And to prove the old truism that once on the merry-go-round, it is hard to fall off, he's already being harassed by the headhunters. So much for the argument that executive pay and perks merely reflect the insecurities of the job.

It is hard to know, what, if anything, should or can be done to halt the ever-upward spiral of executive pay. To attack it through the taxation system would only undermine incentive as well as driving some of our best high-earning talent offshore. But to those who argue that there is nothing wrong with it in any case, because it provides something to aspire to and because top executive pay is only a tiny and insignificant proportion of a company's costs, there is a counter. The evidence is that excess in the boardroom is driving up executive pay across the board. Even in today's flexible labour markets, there will eventually be a knock-on effect further down the labour

force. Regardless of the moral rights and wrongs of the process, then, the long-term effects on corporate health may be highly damaging.

Bock scores a point, but a long game awaits

It was a long and bitterly fought struggle, but ultimately flamboyant old world skills of Tiny Rowland were no match for clinical finish of the modern day German. As on the football pitch, so in the world of business, what the Germans want they tend, eventually, to get.

Dieter Bock must have wondered at many times since boarding Lounrho whether it was all worth the candle, but yesterday he almost smiled. Unwinding the sale of a third of the Metropole hotel chain to the Libyan government will surely be seen as the turning point in his attempt to rebuild the flawed empire Tiny Rowland collected so obsessively over the years.

With the Libyans queering the pitch, there was no way Mr Bock's ultimate break-up plan would ever go ahead. Now it seems there is little that can stop Lounrho's hotels and African trading operations being floated off by Christmas. Game over.

Quite what Colonel Gaddafi will think of the deal his minions have struck is another matter. Simply adding interest at 6.6 per cent to the \$307m he paid Tiny in 1992 is hardly

a fair reflection of what has happened to the hotel market in the past four years.

Tiny's last desperate throw of the dice was made at the low point of the post-Gulf war international travel slump, since when the tourist and business travel industry has boomed. Lounrho has managed to hold on to all the upside while the Libyans took the equity risk.

The most interesting aspect of Lounrho's dismemberment, however, is Mr Bock's apparently new-found interest in running a far-flung African trading empire. It remains to be seen whether developing property in a highly developed European market will prove an appropriate training for the finger-in-the-air trading skills demanded in most African countries. Tiny's greatest contempt was reserved for his successor's aspirations in the region he believed no one else could ever really understand. He thought the whole tawdry battle over his expenses only underlined how little Mr Bock knew about doing business in the Dark Continent.

Even if Tiny is proved wrong on this, and the break-up of single-country fiefdoms into pan-continental agriculture, motors and property businesses starts to bear fruit, it is not immediately apparent that Africa is the coming emerging market Lounrho thinks. As long as its economies remain almost wholly dependent on the oil market, it is hard to see Mr Bock's new baby providing the quality of earnings London investors will demand. His toughest game is yet to kick off.

Fresh allegations link China with copper scam

JOHN WILLCOCK

The Sumitomo copper scandal has escalated significantly with allegations of a cartel linking China with trader Yasuo Hamanaka's bid to rig world prices, and a decision by Japan to follow the US and Britain in opening a criminal inquiry.

The London Metal Exchange held a board meeting yesterday. The LME is co-operating closely with the Securities and Investments Board in its investigation of the scandal. While the LME would not comment on what was discussed, it is understood the unwinding of Sumitomo's copper positions and the fragile state of the copper market were key topics for debate.

Japan has ditched its previous approach of pursuing only a civil enquiry into the affair, in which rogue trader Hamanaka ran up losses on unauthorised trades of at least \$1.8bn (£1.2bn).

Japanese news services said yesterday that the Tokyo district prosecutor's office would investigate whether there was a breach of trust by Hamanaka.

Some market observers fear Sumitomo may eventually lose as much as \$4bn.

The Japanese authorities had previously insisted that none of its laws had been broken since the deals in the affair were conducted outside Japan.

As fallen copper trader Mr Hamanaka stayed in hiding, there were reports that he had colluded with Chinese state firms to control the price of copper.

Sumitomo said it would investigate the cartel report and this would be a key issue in meetings with US, British and Japanese regulators. Officials of China's Non-Ferrous Metals Import and Export Corp declined to comment.

Traders said earlier this week that, as far back as 1988, Mr

Hamanaka used Sumitomo's huge leverage as the biggest copper merchant, controlling big volumes of stocks, in periodic attempts to ramp prices.

Mr Hamanaka's strategy ran into trouble this year when powerful hedge funds decided that copper around \$2,700 per tonne was overpriced and started selling it on the London Metal Exchange, and off the market, to try to force it down and break Mr Hamanaka.

According to reports close to the market, his position had been so strong that George Soros, the hedge fund investor who helped force sterling out of the ERM in 1992, gave up in March.

But sellers led by Herbie Black of Montreal-based American Iron & Metals sold copper again in May.

Reports claimed that Chinese firms with which Sumitomo had joint ventures had a key

role. The Chinese knew of Mr Hamanaka's intentions in the market and vice versa. Both parties profited from this relationship, it is claimed.

According to one veteran metals trader, Mr Hamanaka's successful trading over almost a decade on the LME generated substantial profit for Sumitomo. It may have offset losses on a strategy to win market share by selling physical copper in Asia at low prices.

Sumitomo insists that Mr Hamanaka was acting alone, and that senior executives did not provide any authorisation or have any knowledge of his loss-making trades.

A bid to rig the market, even in collusion with the Chinese, need not involve breaking laws, top traders say. But such activities may concern market regulators in the US and Britain's SIB, both of which have sent investigators to Tokyo.

OFT crosses swords with Labour

MICHAEL HARRISON

The Director General of Fair Trading, John Bridgeman, set himself on a collision course with Labour yesterday by rejecting one of the key changes the party would make to competition policy once in power.

Labour has said it would overhaul the way mergers are vetted so that bidders have to prove that hostile takeovers are in the public interest. At present, they have to be shown to be against the public interest in order to be blocked - a much more onerous test.

But Mr Bridgeman, publishing his first annual report since taking over the post last November, made clear his opposition to the Labour proposal saying: "I suspect it might inhibit healthy merger activity."

In particular Mr Bridgeman said that it could present obstacles to takeovers involving firms in unrelated businesses where there were no competition issues at stake but bidders still had to demonstrate benefits arising from a takeover.

Mr Bridgeman also fired a



Think again: John Bridgeman of the OFT Photograph: FT

on the basis of "behavioural undertakings" by bidders not to engage in anti-competitive activities.

However, Mr Bridgeman said that allowing mergers through on this basis needed to be approached with "considerable caution". He added: "The right remedy for problems which may arise, essentially from the undesirable effect of a merger on the structure of the market would normally itself be structural: generally divestment is the preferred remedy."

The annual report shows that last year was one of the busiest on record with 473 mergers involving assets of £178bn examined - the second-highest number in the OFT's history and a 24 per cent jump on 1994.

There was also a big increase in the number of firms seeking confidential guidance before launching bids to 107 from 76 the year before.

Mr Bridgeman said he did not expect the wave of bus company bids, the biggest single category of merger inquiries last year, to continue and he also forecast a decline in electricity bids.

IN BRIEF

- Unemployment in Japan reached an all-time high in May, swollen by young people unable to find work after the end of the school year. The unemployment rate rose from 3.4 to 3.5 per cent, the highest since records began in 1953. The news cast a shadow over recent evidence pointing to unmistakable signs of modest recovery in the economy after five years in the doldrums. Industrial production rose 2 per cent in May, according to figures earlier this week. Separately, French unemployment jumped by nearly 31,000 in May to reach 3,042,800 or 12.4 per cent of the workforce. The rate could return to the record high of 12.7 per cent later this year, economists predict.
- Hickson International warned that first-half results would be "well below" the comparable period of last year. The company said the previous period was flattered by one-off profits, but the announcement is the latest in a string of bad news which has come out of the chemicals group in the last few years. Hickson said improvement in the group's figures would become more evident in the second half and subsequently throughout 1997.
- Le Creuset, the French pots and pans maker and Screwpull cookware distributor, has agreed a £59.1m bid from a company owned by its chairman, Paul van Zuydam. The offer from Caledon, which already owns 73.7 per cent of Le Creuset, is pitched at 203p a share in cash. The news came as Le Creuset announced that profits had slumped from £3.24m to £963,000 in the year to December, after a £735,000 exceptional charge.
- Eurotunnel said a majority of shareholders backed the main resolutions at its annual meeting on Thursday, while 87 per cent voted against a proposal for the dismissal of certain directors. It said that each of the 10 resolutions proposed by the board of Eurotunnel was passed by a majority of votes, ranging between 62.5 and 97 per cent of the shareholders.
- Domestic and small business customers of Scottish Power and Scottish Hydro-Electric will see bills fall after the announcement of new price controls by the electricity regulator, Ofwat. The decision will cut around £17 a year from the domestic customers' bill. Ofwat also said that, following the flotation of British Energy, its business north of the border, Scottish Nuclear, would no longer charge Scottish Power and Scottish Hydro a premium price for nuclear-generated electricity.

COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Cardiff Property (Q)	26m (28m)	12m (13m)	3.0p (3.1p)	0.5p (0.55p)
Caterpillar (Q)	-	14.6m (25.9m)	33.1p (6.7p)	21.0p (-)
Galaxy Int (Q)	28.5m (17.8m)	4.2m (2.3m)	0.04p (0.03p)	0p (0p)
Leopold Joseph (Q)	-	2.4m (1.4m)	27.5p (17.5p)	15p (-)
Lombard (Q)	1.03m (1m)	60m (62m)	4p (3.2p)	2.25p (2.25p)
Macleod Healthcare (Q)	4.6m (3.8m)	0.7m (0.6m)	7p (5.3p)	3.75p (-)
Partridge Film Arts (Q)	7.5m (7.2m)	1.3m (1.1m)	3.87p (3.41p)	1.4p (1.4p)
Quayway Cruise (Q)	17.5m (13.9m)	4.2m (3.7m)	1.5p (1.5p)	0p (0p)
Telecel (Q)	-	2.5m (2.5m)	4.43p (3.88p)	0.8p (-)

(Q) - Fiscal (Q) - Interim (Q) - Nine months

Missing billions halve Britain's trading deficit

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Britain's balance of payments was in the red last year by less than half as much as first estimated. Revised figures yesterday showed a shortfall of £2.9bn, compared with the first estimate of £5.7bn, thanks to the discovery of billions of pounds worth of extra income from UK investments overseas.

The balance improved further in the first quarter of this year, mainly due to a fall in Britain's payments to the EU from their abnormally high level in the last three months of 1995. The deficit fell by £151m to below £1.1bn.

The breathtaking scale of the statisticians' improvements to last year's figures helped push sterling half a penny higher against the mark. It closed at DM2.35.

Simon Briscoe, UK economist at Nikko Europe, said: "This news pushes any worries about the trade account beyond the horizon of the election."

According to the new figures, Britain's net investment income reached a record £9.6bn in 1995, and improved by £200m to £2.9bn in the first quarter of 1996. Official statisticians and the Bank of England will be investigating the scale of revisions to the figures, which are drawn from a banks' survey.

City analysts were wary about the good news. "There is no guarantee these figures will prove any more definitive than the last," Ian Shepherdson at HSBC Markets said. However, investment income was clearly

on an upward trend. In addition, the net amount of transfers overseas - dominated by British payments to the EU - retreated from its unusually high level of £2.1bn at the end of last year to £1.4bn.

These two improvements made up for a disappointing decline in the surplus on trade in services. It slipped to £910m in January-March from £1.4bn in the fourth quarter of 1995.

Two trends accounted for this. There was a small fall in the balance earned by financial services and a deterioration in travel. There was an increase in trips abroad by both personal and business travellers.

Trade in goods slipped further into the red, reaching £3.53bn. Separate figures yesterday showed that the economy grew 0.4 per cent in the first quarter, the same as the original estimate.

But the year-on-year growth rate was revised down to 1.9 per cent because of a small rise in the figure for GDP in the first quarter of 1995.

The Office for National Statistics also reported a different mix of growth compared with the previous estimates. It revised up consumer spending growth to 0.9 from 0.8 per cent, leaving it the biggest quarterly increase since the end of 1993. The explanation was revealed by growth in real personal disposable income, or after-tax income adjusted for inflation. It was up a robust 4 per cent in the year to the first quarter.

Investment was also upgraded, rising 1.5 per cent rather than 0.7 per cent.

Two Wickes directors suspended

Two directors of Wickes, the troubled DIY group, have been suspended as part of the investigations into accounting errors that led to an over-statement of the group's profits, writes Nigel Cope.

Les Rosenthal, group trading director, and Chris Miles, UK commercial director, were yesterday suspended from the business pending the completion of the investigation being undertaken by Price Waterhouse.

They will continue to co-operate fully with the investigation. However, the company said the pair would "have no further dealings with suppliers customers or staff".

It is understood that the problems could stretch back three or four years with the possible over-statement of profits amounting to £15m-£20m. It is unlikely the company will be able to announce a more precise figure for at least a week to enable the shares to resume trading. They were suspended at 69p.

Henry Sweetbaum, the former chairman who resigned this week, is understood to have retained City law firm Herbert Smith to act on his behalf, though this was not confirmed. It is possible he could claim compensation for loss of office as his contract was not due to expire until November 1997.

St Michael

MARKS & SPENCER

SAFETY RECALL.

BOYS TODDLER NAVY BASEBALL JACKET.

(JUNIOR SPORTS' BADGE ON LEFT FRONT.)

ALL SIZES
(1 YEAR - 4 YEARS.)

SELLING PRICE £22.

COLOUR	ITEM NUMBER
NAVY	T77 02805/4959

Marks & Spencer has established that some metal studs on the above jacket may become detached from the garment after washing.

The individual parts of the stud may be hazardous to small children.

This jacket has been on sale since February 1996, and has now been removed from display.

Customers who have purchased this jacket are advised to return it immediately to the Customer Service Desk at their local store where a full refund will be given.

Marks & Spencer apologise for any inconvenience caused to customers.

MARKS & SPENCER

new market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3711.0+ 32.2

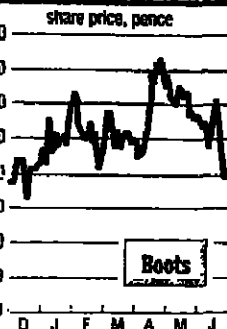
FT-SE 250
4353.2+ 12.3

FT-SE 350
1870.9+ 13.8

SEAQ VOLUME
721m shares,
25 232 bargains

Gifts Index
N/A

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Window-dressing helps half-year to a resolute end

TAKING STOCK

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter
of the year

Shares ended the half-year on a resolute note. A little late institutional window-dressing firm gliss and hopes of an interest rate cut next week pushed the FT-SE 100 index back above 3,700 points, although best levels were not always held.

Amid the resurgence, TI Group, the engineer, was the poorest-performing blue chip, falling 15p to 538p as fears reappeared it would merge into the comfier merger between Lucas Industries and Vario, the US car parts group. Rumours of a counter-strike have not been far below the surface since the deal emerged in May.

TI has often been linked with Lucas which has already been forced to endure the brief attentions of BBA, the brakes group which considered an audacious £2.4bn offer.

With Vario, Lucas will be one of the world's largest car component groups. There is a

clear temptation for other industry powers to block the deal. Among those thought to be in the Lucas vicinity are GM, the US giant, and Continental players such as Mannesmann, the German engineer with nearly 9 per cent of Lucas, up 15p to 236.5p.

Lloyds TSB led the blue chip charge. In a bank sector enjoying a relaxation in the mortgage war the shares jumped 10p to 315p. James Capel lifted this year's profit forecast by 4.5 per cent to £2.42bn and next by 7 per cent to £2.75bn. With the mortgage battle fading Abbey National gained 12p to 541p. Barclays added 13p to 773p and National Westminster Bank 5p to 610p. HSBC put on 18p to 1,008p.

Scottish & Newcastle, the nation's biggest brewer, frothed 7p higher to 659p. Results are due on Monday with £15m against £26m expected. Guinness, after a poor



run, continued to gather strength, gaining 12p to 469p. Many of the pub/restaurant groups, mauled on Thursday, managed modest recoveries. JD Wetherspoon, for example, rallied 15p to 1,005p.

GRE, seen as the next insurance takeover target, improved 7p to 248p and Renam, the paper and packaging group, rallied 14p to 339p.

The market rally comes at the end of what has been an indifferent month for blue chips. In the past two weeks daily Footsie falls have been more than twice gains. Political worries have been the major factor. Low trading levels have also taken their toll.

Boots shaded 1p to 579p. Its £300m share buy-back prompted some retailers to move higher as the market speculated that part of the Boots cash will be pumped into other store shares. Storehouse, up 10p to 324p, was the main beneficiary of such thinking.

Alexa, the fashion group which has staged a sharp recovery from three years of losses, gained 8p to 145p on director buying. Chairman Patrick Cooper picked up 10,000 shares at 137p; he last bought shares a year ago at 28p.

Broadcasters managed pluses following Whitehall's clearance of the controversial Granada stake in Yorkshire

Tyne Tees Television. Yorkshire gained 7p to 1,155p and BT, 35p to 319p.

T&N fell 9p to 140p on worries about asbestos claims and BTR slipped 1.5p to 253.5p. Cardinal Business, following higher losses, fell 5p to 21p.

Le Creuset, a cookware and tableware group, gained 23p to 200p as chairman Paul van Zuydam produced his promised bid to take the company private. He is offering 203p a share.

Blenheim rose 8p to 423p on hopes United News & Media will produce its offer early next week.

Johnson, the building materials group, held at 500p as the controversial tender offer from aggressive conglomerate IT Group flopped. IT gathered just 7 per cent against a 27.5 per cent target.

On AIM, Firecrest, the Internet provider which has a volatile record, was suspended after jumping 17p to 70p ahead of details about the marketing of one of its products. The shares touched 193p last year. Newcomer Intelligent Environment, placed at 94p, ended at 85p. Omnicare returned from suspension following the take over of Amcare, supplying medical products to patients confined to their homes. Shares were sold at 110p to fund the acquisition. They opened at 120p, ending at 115p.

The day's biggest excitement was once again reserved for the fringe Oxfam market. A company called Display International shot from 10p to 265p in first-day dealings. It is, of course, an Internet provider, offering access to share and bond prices, plus commodities and currency rates, through software installed in a personal computer.

Amibex, with oil and gas interests in Russia, jumped 7p to 64p as an as-yet-unidentified institutional shareholder pumped in nearly £2m, buying 3.5 million new shares at 57p.

The cash will go towards Russian and Tunisian developments. The company's new investor, to be named next week, will have 9 per cent of the capital. The injection comes ahead of a planned equity and debt financing package from the World Bank which will have a 20 per cent interest.

Ashbourne, the nursing home group where Sun Healthcare of the United States has 30 per cent, made investment presentations this week. The company is thought to be on the verge of buying two or three homes with up to 300 beds. The shares eased 3p to 149p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: 1 Ex rights; 2 Ex dividend; 3 Ex all rights; 4 Ex all rights and dividends; 5 Suspended; 6 Partly paid; 7 Partly paid; 8 Partly paid; 9 Partly paid; 10 Partly paid; 11 Partly paid; 12 Partly paid; 13 Partly paid; 14 Partly paid; 15 Partly paid; 16 Partly paid; 17 Partly paid; 18 Partly paid; 19 Partly paid; 20 Partly paid; 21 Partly paid; 22 Partly paid; 23 Partly paid; 24 Partly paid; 25 Partly paid; 26 Partly paid; 27 Partly paid; 28 Partly paid; 29 Partly paid; 30 Partly paid; 31 Partly paid; 32 Partly paid; 33 Partly paid; 34 Partly paid; 35 Partly paid; 36 Partly paid; 37 Partly paid; 38 Partly paid; 39 Partly paid; 40 Partly paid; 41 Partly paid; 42 Partly paid; 43 Partly paid; 44 Partly paid; 45 Partly paid; 46 Partly paid; 47 Partly paid; 48 Partly paid; 49 Partly paid; 50 Partly paid; 51 Partly paid; 52 Partly paid; 53 Partly paid; 54 Partly paid; 55 Partly paid; 56 Partly paid; 57 Partly paid; 58 Partly paid; 59 Partly paid; 60 Partly paid; 61 Partly paid; 62 Partly paid; 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Only practice is free in Formula One

Motor racing

DERICK ALLSOP
reports from Magny-Cours

Another Friday, another yawn. Formula One's designated competition-free zone is seriously undermining an already flimsy show.

Bad enough that the world championship is a cruise for Williams-Renault and that only one of their drivers, Damon Hill, appears capable of extracting anything remotely close to the car's potential. Jacques Villeneuve, the much trumpeted import from IndyCars, has frankly been a disappointment so far and David Coulthard is doubtless steaming inside the cockpit of his McLaren-Mercedes.

However, to add insult to the spectators, qualifying has been taken off the schedule of the first day of practice. The teams, not unreasonably, are more intent on preparing for the race than pushing for meaningless times, so the tension and spectacle have all but evaporated and the opening free practice here before tomorrow's French Grand Prix followed the now familiar routine.

The authorities, supported by many drivers and teams, took the decision to confine qualifying to Saturday this season for the specific purpose of ensuring a full and committed turnout in the final hour. Even if it rains, the drivers have to go and earn their grid positions. Officials still maintain it is a policy worth persisting with, but around the paddock and along the pit lane, opinion is changing. The view from the grandstand is clear: transforming Friday practice into a non-event is too high a price to pay.

The punter is anxiously counting the escalating cost of Formula One. On top of astronomical admission prices, the travelling fan is also encountering an organised tip-off at his or her hotel here. Rooms usually priced at less than £20 are now more than £70. Four star hotels are charging £300 a night. Formula One has long been associated with a greed mentality, yet the current trend is exceeding all previous outrages. Value for money is apparently an abandoned cause.

Hill, of course, will be perfectly content for the second half of the season to continue along its unmitigated course. He heads Villeneuve by 21 points and Michael Schumacher by 27.



Focus of attention: Damon Hill faces the press after yesterday's practice session for the French Grand Prix at Magny-Cours. Photograph: Empics

and they are evidently the only drivers who may present any semblance of a threat, providing they can start well.

Hill put paid to Villeneuve's plans last time out by cutting off the Canadian's launch from the grid in Montreal and went on to secure his fifth win of the season.

Villeneuve says he is now focussed to counter that tactic should Hill employ it tomorrow and the feelings within the Williams camp tend to suggest they again expect to occupy the front row of the grid. For the record, Hill was sixth yesterday, Villeneuve seventh.

Mike Hakkinen, in the McLaren, was first, followed by Olivier Panis, enjoying the advantage of driving on Ligier-Mugen-Honda's home track.

Hill had an uncomfortable start to the day, his car bucking over a kerb and giving him an anxious moment before the four wheels made contact with the ground again. Immediately he took it to the garage to have it checked out. "When you give the car heavy treatment like that it's best to get it checked straight away," Hill said. "There are quite a few things we're

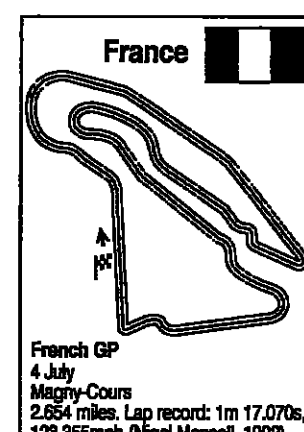
working on to improve for qualifying. "I think this is a good track. It has some quick corners but good run-off areas, fortunately. So it is safe as well as interesting."

He insisted the competition was hotting up. "People have got a grip on things at this stage of the season. It's looking clearer right now and I don't think we're as good as we can be."

Schumacher, fifth in his Ferrari, was even less assured. He said: "We have to come up with some new ideas, and it won't be easy."

Martin Brundle, in a Jordan-Peugeot, was 11th and Johnny Herbert, of Sauber-Ford, 19th.

FRENCH GRAND PRIX (Magny-Cours)
Race times after completed free practice sessions:
1. M Hakkinen (Fin) McLaren-Mercedes 1:10.47; 2. O Panis (Fra) Ligier-Mugen-Honda 1:18.20; 3. G Berger (Aut) Benetton-Renault 1:18.24; 4. J Villeneuve (Can) Williams-Renault 1:18.26; 5. M Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari 1:18.42; 6. M Hill (GB) Williams-Renault 1:18.58; 7. Villeneuve (Can) Williams-Renault 1:18.58; 8. D Coulthard (GB) McLaren-Mercedes 1:18.59; 9. E Irvine (GB) Ferrari 1:19.08; 10. P Dreyer (Den) Ligier-Mugen-Honda 1:19.09; 11. M Salo (Fin) Sauber-Ford 1:19.47; 12. R Barrichello (Bra) Jordan-Hart 1:19.57; 13. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 14. J Herbert (GB) Sauber-Ford 1:20.12; 15. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 16. P Dreyer (Den) Ligier-Mugen-Honda 1:20.12; 17. M Salo (Fin) Sauber-Ford 1:20.12; 18. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 19. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 20. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 21. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12; 22. J Verstappen (Neth) Fortec-Ford 1:20.12.



France GP
4 July
Magny-Cours
2.654 miles. Lap record: 1m 17.070s, 123.355mph (Nigel Mansell, 1992)

Backley has last chance for Atlanta

Athletics
MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Just nine weeks after going under the surgeon's knife for an Achilles tendon operation, Britain's European javelin champion Steve Backley returns to action this weekend in a final effort to gain Olympic selection.

The British team for Atlanta will be finalised at midnight after tomorrow's Bupa Games in Gateshead, and although this represents a last chance for Backley, it is far from last ditch.

The 27-year-old former world record holder from Salford is ready to fulfil the selectors' request that he show fitness - whatever that might mean. John Truwer, Backley's long-time coach, believes he will be able to perform more than adequately.

"Steve is in good shape," Truwer said. "He needs a bit more time to get into medal-winning form, and he was looking ideally for a good performance at the London Grand Prix on 12 July, when he will be better again. But he will do what he has to do."

Backley, who like Jonathan Edwards, was left out of the initial squad pending a show of fitness, will be seeking to throw 80 metres or over to secure the third place alongside Nick Nieland and his training partner Mick Hill, who were first and second in the Olympic trials.

But Colin Mackenzie, who finished third in the trials, could give the selectors cause for some consideration if he finishes above Backley tomorrow.

It was a cruel injury for Backley that a physical weakness should hamper him soon after he published a book about the benefits of positive thinking. But there are few in the sport more capable of coping with injury than Backley, who spent a whole season out with a shoulder injury so tender that he could hardly bear to brush his teeth for a while.

He came back triumphantly in 1994 to retain his European title, and added a world silver last year behind the Olympic

champion and the favourite, Jan Zelezny.

Backley had nursed a minor Achilles tendon problem for two years, but when it failed to improve this year he had an operation. "In hindsight," Truwer said, "it would have been better to have had it in January rather than April. But once he had made the decision it was almost a relief, because if he wants to be able to compete at top level it was the only thing to be done."

Backley's swift return was helped by a surgical technique which meant he did not need plaster. He spent 10 days on crutches, discarded them for a time, during which he got back to throwing, then returned to the gym for another five days at a crucial point after the operation, when the tendon was due to heal itself.

He took his original omission from the team well, although it would be true to say he was not thrilled by the policy. But Truwer is confident his man will come through. "Jonathan Edwards has cleared the hurdle, and I'm sure Steve will," he said. "If Backley doesn't, though, it is still an open question whether he will be joined in the squad by Linford Christie, who has said he will announce on Monday, after competing at Gateshead, if he is defending his 100 metres title. Edwards, meanwhile, competes in the triple jump against Brian Wellman, silver medalist behind him in last year's World Championships.

The men's 800m will see Craig Wainwright, Britain's fastest this year, seeking a more convincing run than he managed in the trials to secure the third Atlanta place. Local boy Tony Morrell, third then, will be seeking to frustrate his plans.

The 400 metres appears to be one of the most competitive events. Two men who have already secured Atlanta places, Iwan Thomas and Du'Aine Ladebe, meet in a race that also includes Jamie Baulch, fourth in the trials, last year's European champion, and America's Derek Mills, who missed out in the US trials by two places earlier this month.

Hilton comes home to Wigan Hall banned until end of next season

Rugby League

Mark Hilton's presence in the Warrington pack has been one of the major successes of the Super League season - and on Sunday he is aiming to make a big impact against his hometown club, Wigan.

A first-team player with the Wire for the last four seasons, Hilton has been ever-present and in magnificent form throughout the Super League campaign, but he has never been in a side that have been beaten Wigan.

Now the 21-year-old former Wigan Schools prop believes Warrington are in the best shape they have been in for

some time to gain a win against the champions, Wigan, who have climbed back to within one point of the leaders, St Helens.

"Our form has been good," explained the England international Hilton. "At the moment our confidence is high and we believe we're good enough to beat Wigan."

"We're not making any rash promises and we'll have to be on our best form, but that's never been a different aspect of Wigan. They are just one point away from Saints and they will not want to slip further behind again," Hilton added. "I've never been in a winning team against Wigan, but the conditions are now right for that trend to be altered."

The Wire forward has a professional respect for the Wigan team, saying: "I know many of their players and they're a good bunch of lads, but that won't be counting for anything on Sunday."

"I played for Wigan Schools and then at Orrell St James amateur club where I was alongside Wigan's England captain Andy Farrell, so I know what to expect from him."

Warrington will have Gary Chambers back in the other prop position after a rib injury that has forced him to miss the last three games.

Other injury concerns are Iestyn Harris (hamstring), Mark Jones (knee), and Jon Roper (groin). All three are awaiting

final clearances to play and are expected to make it through their fitness tests.

Wigan are waiting for centre Va'ia Tuigamala to return from Auckland after the aborted Oceania Cup competition.

He should have flown in today, but is now expected back tomorrow, while Test winger Martin Offiah (toe) and Welsh international prop Neil Cowie (hamstring), are struggling to regain fitness in time for the Central Park giants.

That could well open the way for senior returns for long-term injury victims, stand-off Nigel Wright, and half-back Sean Long, who have been added to the first-team squad for the trip to Widnespool.

The Bramley forward, Dean Hall, has been suspended until the end of next season after being sent off for use of the elbow in the Second Division match against Hunslet last week.

The 15-month ban, one of the longest ever imposed in Britain, is for "deliberately, callously and forcibly attacking the head of an opponent with his elbow".

The disciplinary committee has issued a statement, saying that the incident "had great potential for serious injury". They said that, despite lengthy suspensions for similar incidents, Hall had persisted with use of the elbow and that it had a duty to protect other players.

The Bramley chairman, Jeff Wine, whose club is one of the bottom four whose membership could come under scrutiny at the Rugby League Council meeting on Wednesday, said: "It's typical of the sentences Bramley have received this season and we feel that we are being picked on. We are leaving it to the player to decide what action he wants to take."

London Broncos are treating today's game against Bradford as a Cup final, with a top-four place at the end of the season as the prize. "It is the most important game for us," said the London coach, Tony Currie. "If we win it, we will be one point outside the top four with Warrington to play."

Currie is able to bring back

Peter Gill after injury, although in a stand-off role that he has not played regularly for years.

"That gives some clue about the way we are going to play," Currie said. "We will be looking for a very strong defensive performance from Peter."

Workington, the bottom club, go to Sheffield today with a pack that looks more threatening than ever. Colin Armstrong was sold to Swinton this week and Jason Palmada, who may join the exodus soon, and Stephen Holgate, who is being linked with Wigan, are both likely to miss out with injuries.

However, Brad Nairn returns from suspension and Tony Smith could make his comeback after breaking his hand.

The city of Hull is involved in two matches tomorrow that will have far-reaching influence on the top of the lower divisions.

Hull will be favourites to finish second in the First Division if they can beat Keighley at the Boulevard, while Hull KR can put two points between themselves and Hunslet if they can come away from the South Leeds Stadium with a victory.

Huddersfield, whose application to join Super League will be considered on Wednesday, have offered to give up the full share of News Corporation money to which they would be entitled for their first year and to manage on the smaller, First Division allocation.

Germany's Olympic team win in style

Equestrianism

Germany gained a commanding victory in the Nations Cup over their showground here yesterday, beating the Swiss, the European champions, and leaving Britain trailing in sixth place, writes Goeffrey Murphy from Aachen.

The Germans sent out their probable Olympic team: Franki Sloothack on San Patrignano Joly (who jumped a double clear), Lars Nieberg on For Pleasure (four faults and clear) and Ulf Kirchhoff on Jus de Pommes (another double clear) and Ludger Beerbaum on Ratu (who had one clear round and was not required to jump again).

Rommie Massarella, the manager of the British team, did not use any of his likely Olympic horses and he refused to be intimidated by Germany's sterling performance.

Massarella had other problems yesterday. Dollar Girl, tentatively selected on Thursday evening after she had crashed through a fence, was sore yesterday morning and had to be replaced. The team manager brought in Geoff Glazard and Hello Oscar, who are both competing here for the first time. They had five fences down in each round.

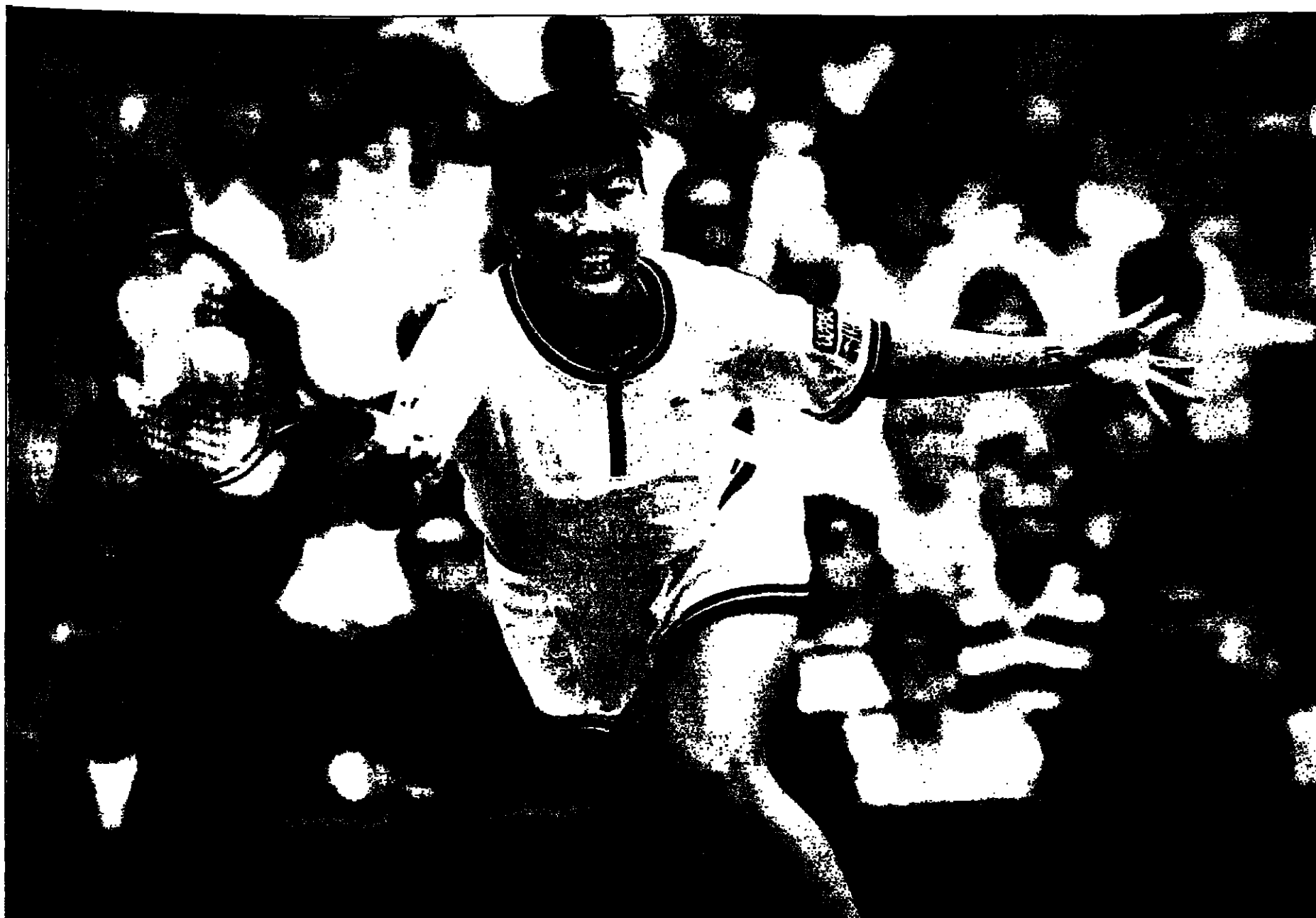
Athletics
Burund's Veronique Nyongiso closed 30m in 32.72s, the fastest time in 1,500 metres of the year, at a meeting in Malmö, Sweden, on Thursday. Her time was 1.58sec inside the 1995 best by Neerudine Morandi, of Algeria, in Rome earlier this month.

Equestrianism
Tegle Loupou, the New York City marathon champion, was soundly beaten by Sally Seussola in the 10,000 metres final at Kenya's Olympic trials yesterday, placing in doubt her selection for next month's Atlanta Games. Seussola, the Olympic 800m champion, fended off a strong challenge from young milers to qualify for the 2,500m final. Seussola was 2.58sec behind the little-known Edith Maru who won her semi-final in 3min 42.50sec. Lucas Morogoo was third. The second semi-final was won by another unknown, Lashan Rotich, in a 3min 36.70sec time with Stephen Kipkorir second and David Kibet third.

Baseball
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Toronto 9, Detroit 3; Boston 8, New York Yankees 3; Baltimore 2, Chicago White Sox 15; Cleveland 10, Milwaukee 6; Kansas City 2, Oakland 18; California 2.

Cricket
Mark Nicholas, the former Hampshire captain, is in a moot team to play South Africa A at Shenley in a three-day match starting on Wednesday 10 July. Keith Arthurton of the West Indies and Alan Dodderidge of Australia are included in the side, as well as Grant and Andy Flower of Zimbabwe. Arthurton will also feature in an MCC one-day tie-up against the Pakistan tourists at Shenley on 14 July.

Equestrianism
AACHEN NATIONS CUP SHOW (Germany): Nations Cup 1. Germany (two faults); 2. Britain (4); 3. Belgium (4); 4. Netherlands (12); 5. Ireland (22.25); 6. Great Britain (26); 7. Ireland (26.25); 8. Germany (26.25); 9. Ireland (26.25); 10. Ireland (26.25); 11. Ireland (26.25); 12. Ireland (26.25); 13. Ireland (26.25); 14. Ireland (26.25); 15. Ireland (26.25); 16. Ireland (26.25); 17. Ireland (26.25); 18. Ireland (26.25); 19. Ireland (26.25); 20. Ireland (26.25); 21. Ireland (26.25); 22. Ireland (26.25); 23. Ireland (26.25); 24. Ireland (26.25); 25. Ireland (26.25); 26. Ireland (26.25); 27. Ireland (26.25); 28. Ireland (26.25); 29. Ireland (26.25); 30. Ireland (26.25); 31. Ireland (26.25); 32. Ireland (26.25); 33. Ireland (26.25); 34. Ireland (26.25); 35. Ireland (26.25); 36. Ireland (26.25); 37. Ireland (26.25); 38. Ireland (26.25); 39. Ireland (26.25); 40. Ireland (26.25); 41. Ireland (26.25); 42. Ireland (26.25); 43. Ireland (26.25); 44. Ireland (26.25); 45. Ireland (26.25); 46. 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Naoko Sawamatsu, the Japanese player, is stretched on the forehand during her defeat by Arantxa Sanchez Vicario at Wimbledon yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

Final beckons Sanchez Vicario

GUY HODGSON

They all swear blind that it is each game as it comes, yet more than one woman at Wimbledon steered herself, took a deep breath and had an optimistic peek at the bottom of the women's singles draw after Monica Seles was removed from it. Whether anyone studied the either/or equations with her heart beating faster than Arantxa Sanchez Vicario is debatable.

The Spaniard had been scheduled to meet Seles in the semi-finals but now, courtesy of Katarina Stenikova, the route to a successive final appears to be relatively clear. Certainly, her

opponent yesterday, Naoko Sawamatsu, did not present a formidable barrier.

There were nine Japanese women in the singles, a remarkable advance for the land of the rising daughter, but despite a more than respectable record at Wimbledon, she did not have the game to trouble Sanchez Vicario. The groundstrokes, yes, but the imagination, absolutely no.

The first set was a baseline battle of attrition in which Sawamatsu broke in the fourth and sixth games only for Sanchez Vicario to trump with breaks of her own in games three, seven and nine.

Once the fourth seed knew that her opponent had few surprises in her kit-bag, however,

it was a formality and, despite an interruption for rain, she won 6-4, 6-1.

"I concentrated better after the break," Sanchez Vicario said. "I started playing more aggressive, trying to go for my shots. I think I improved when I needed to. I'm playing better at this stage than I was last year. I feel more comfortable."

Apart from a pain in the wrist that is. Just about the last thing the championships need, particularly with Boris Becker's withdrawal, was another name to succumb to injury so it was probably more than the medical staff who were concerned when Sanchez Vicario pulled up with a wrist injury during the match.

"I stretched one of the ligaments in my arm as I went for

a shot," she said, "and my wrist went the other way. It's not anything important. I'll just have to take care."

One seed who did not take sufficient care was Brenda Schultz-McCarthy who appears to have everything she needs to succeed at Wimbledon but manages to blow it on an annual basis. This time the Dutch 11th seed found a way to make an early exit against Sabine Appelmans.

The Belgian plays left-handed because her friends used to when she was little, which makes you wonder what kind of player she would be if she ever used the stronger wing because she tamed the most violent serve in the women's game.

"I stretched one of the ligaments in my arm as I went for

ball down at speeds approaching 130mph and at 6ft 2in she rarely has to do much more than stretch out her arms to finish off the job even if her opponent's co-ordination is fast enough to make a return. Appelmans was quick and accurate, and faced with the novel experience of having to move her feet, Schultz-McCarthy was slowly worn down 7-5, 3-6, 12-10.

Four years ago one man put £10,000 on that Schultz-McCarthy would Wimbledon one day, a bet that is looking less wise by the year. It would have taken an extremely bold punter, however, to place money on Mary Joe Fernandez lasting longer in the tournament than Seles after she had been forcibly removed from the

court by the erstwhile Yugoslav Ashe and recognises that tennis is not the preferred sport among black children. "You know, the kids I was growing up with, none of them ever played tennis and I got a couple of jabs," he said.

"It can be an economic thing, I mean it's not the cheapest sport in the world, but heck, my Dad taught me so it's not like we were ever paying for tennis lessons."

Payment for anything is no longer a problem, especially as Washington could probably earn just as much as a male model. People magazine once selected him as among "The Top 50 Most Beautiful People in the World." Heck, that makes him bluish you know.

Washington making a name for himself

RICHARD EDMONDSON

It is not easy being an umpire at Wimbledon. You have to adjudicate on codes of dress, player behaviour and close line calls. And then there are the names.

The sporting equivalent of Peter Piper is offered at Wimbledon every year and yesterday the big one seemed to be Mali-Vai Washington v Bohdan Ulihrach. The accepted pronunciation for the former in Europe is "mally-vi", but if you asked for that person at the front door of his Florida home a puzzled look would spread

over the occupant's face. (The caller might feel a bit weary anyway after the walk up the drive: Washington has collected career prize money of \$2,372,042 (£1.5m).

Our man is actually called called mal-la-VEE-yah and his parents seem to believe the initial M is rather nicely with the Washington surname. None of that George or Denzil nonsense. Mali-Vai has a brother Mashiska and three sisters, Mashona, Micheala and Masanja.

As he had to deal with only surnames, the umpire on Court Two was spared a verbal faux pas yesterday whenever Washington had to be mentioned. But

on the occasions his opponent won a game, a strange noise came from the top of the official's chair, the sort you normally hear when you find your granddad gurgling in the bathroom. Bohdan Ulihrach (BO-dan, OO-lee-rah) sounds as dreadful as Vlad The Impaler and his name certainly scared the living daylights out of John Frame (frame).

Washington was less disturbing. His manners are lovely. The world No 20 does not miss on any please or thank you when ball-boys bring him water, and on the rare occasions he had to question a call yesterday, he approached the chair with an almost embarrassed posture.

Washington may be 5ft 11in but he is operating in the land of the giants and his chunky body accentuates this relative smallness. Over the net was the modern prototype. The 21-year-old from Prague is 6ft 2in of the leanest cut in the shop. But, as the match progressed, Ulihrach, shrank further from his full height to end up a bent, forlorn figure. In less than an hour and a quarter Washington had blown away him, and the Czech Republic's sense of invincibility, by a 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 scoreline.

With Boris Becker now removed, the American appears to have calm waters ahead of him to the semi-finals, where he should not count on the undi-

vided support that rolled from the stands yesterday. He could meet one Tim Henman at that stage. That would be some progress for the 27-year-old, as he has never previously been beyond the second round here. In 1991 he lost to Ivan Lendl by two sets to love before presenting the No 3 seed with the match on a velvet cushion.

For some reason people reckon on the bet of the tournament is Sampras. But the only real certainty is Washington to go through a sentence without using the word "heck" or the phrase "you know". He will not be appearing on Radio Four's *Just A Minute*.

Washington is the best black

American player since Arthur Ashe and recognises that tennis is not the preferred sport among black children. "You know, the kids I was growing up with, none of them ever played tennis and I got a couple of jabs," he said. "It can be an economic thing, I mean it's not the cheapest sport in the world, but heck, my Dad taught me so it's not like we were ever paying for tennis lessons."

Payment for anything is no longer a problem, especially as Washington could probably earn just as much as a male model. People magazine once selected him as among "The Top 50 Most Beautiful People in the World." Heck, that makes him bluish you know.

Ball-girl gives Henman some sensible advice

The ball-girl, hit in the head by a ball struck in exasperation by Tim Henman during last year's championships, yesterday wished him good luck in his bid to become the first British man to win Wimbledon since Fred Perry in 1936.

Student Caroline Hall, 17, now too old to be a ball-girl, said the incident which cost Henman his place in the tournament last year, was water under the bridge.

"It's him I feel sorry for he's really got a lot of pressure on him. I think he's got a great chance and will go a long way. If it's not this year it will be soon," she said.

"He's a really nice guy - a really natural person as well. His first-round performance against Yevgeny Kafelnikov was really brilliant and a really tough first round."

"What happened is all water under the bridge. It hurt at the time because the ball was travelling at 90mph and hit me on the side of the head but since then it has been fine."

"I wish him good luck and I'll be watching. My advice to the ball-girls is don't worry about keeping your head down just

concentrate on the game," she said speaking from her home in south London.

Prep school boy Henman is hoping to beat taxi driver's son Luke J. Milligan, 19, to become the only home-grown talent still in this year's men's singles.

Henman's defeat of the world No 5 Kafelnikov has made him ninth favourite to lift the men's trophy at 50-1 and become the first Briton to win a singles' title at Wimbledon since Virginia Wade in 1977.

The incident with the ball happened during a first-round doubles match last year with Henman disqualified after his angry swipe after losing a point he felt he should have won.

He later apologised with flowers and a kiss. Henman, 21, is a tennis thoroughbred, and the fourth generation in his family to play at Wimbledon.

His great-grandmother Ellen Stawell-Brown was the first woman to serve overarm at Wimbledon, while his grandfather, Henry Billington, reached the third round of the men's singles in the late 40s and early 50s.

Three of his children competed at junior Wimbledon, one of whom is Tim's mother, Jane.

Court circular

Jensen flannels his way through

● Luke Jensen has got "his wish" to wear "three lions" on his shirt" at Wimbledon.

Jensen, an American, was banned from wearing an England football jersey during the championships but got around Wimbledon rules after making a trip to Lillywhites sports shop in the centre of London.

When he walked out on court for his mixed doubles first round with Nicole Arendt, he was bedecked in full cricket kit.

"I was all decked out with long trousers and a cricket sweater that had the three lions on the front," said Jensen, who was a 1996 French Open finalist with Arendt.

Jensen, who was also wearing a Robbie Fowler-style nose-plaster to improve his breathing, moved comfortably into the second round with a straight-sets victory.

After the match Jensen, nicknamed "Dual Hand Luke", because of his ability to play both left and right-handed revealed his tactics for playing mixed doubles. "You naturally go for looks when picking your partner," he said with a smile. "And when you play of course you go for the girl but not with big serves because most of them drill it back. It's the spin they can't handle."

If you lose, your tactics change a little, he added. "Well, you can always blame the girl in mixed doubles," said Jensen, who might have hit on the flannels idea while offering expert comment on the championships for the benefit Radio Five Live listeners.

If Arendt does pick up the mixed doubles title with Jensen, she will get more than the £34,000 prize-money - she is a big collector of Swarovski silver animals and treats herself to one after every competition.



A spectator is less than enthralled by the action on No 2 court yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

Rock bash for Cash

John McEnroe and Pat Cash, once the wild boys of Wimbledon, are reaching for their guitars and joining top rock stars to raise money for charity.

It is a cause close to their hearts - the Vitas Gerulaitis Foundation that commemorates the name of their old friend and gives inner-city children a chance to play tennis. They will be packing a London West End club this weekend with Rod Stewart, Peter Gabriel, The Who, Wet Wet Wet and Oasis.

Up to 1,000 guests are expected for Saturday's concert which could give Wimbledon

luminaries such as Pete Sampras a welcome break.

The injury-plagued Cash, back at Wimbledon to play in the doubles this year, believes rock stars and tennis players make good soul mates. "Tennis people love their music. It's their major way of relaxing. And the musos love their sport," he said.

McEnroe was initially sceptical, telling Cash: "It wouldn't be the same without Vitas." But he was soon convinced. "I'm sure Vitas is watching over this and ensuring it's a good party," Cash said.

THE SEEDS' PROGRESS

MEN'S SINGLES				WOMEN'S SINGLES			
Holder: Pete Sampras (United States)				Holder: Steffi Graf (Germany)			
1 P. SAMPRAS	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	2 B. BECKER	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	1 S. GRAF	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	2 A. SANCHEZ	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
3 A. AGASSI	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	4 G. MICHAEL	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	3 C. MCNAB	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	4 A. MANENDEZ	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
5 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	6 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	5 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	6 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
7 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	8 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	7 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	8 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
9 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	10 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	9 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	10 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
11 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	12 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	11 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	12 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
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19 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	20 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	19 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	20 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
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23 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	24 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	23 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	24 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
25 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	26 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	25 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	26 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
27 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	28 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	27 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	28 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
29 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	30 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	29 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	30 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
31 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	32 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	31 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	32 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
33 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	34 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	33 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	34 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
35 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	36 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	35 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	36 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
37 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	38 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	37 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	38 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
39 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	40 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	39 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	40 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
41 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	42 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	41 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	42 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
43 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	44 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	43 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	44 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
45 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	46 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	45 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	46 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
47 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	48 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	47 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	48 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos
49 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	50 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	49 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos	50 J. McENROE	Next opponent: R3 Huesos

QUOTE OF THE DAY	STATISTICS OF THE DAY
"What do you say to a guy who has won Wimbledon three times and is second seed? I just said 'bad luck.' Neville Godwin on Boris Becker's retirement"	32 - number of times a Briton has won the men's singles. 41 - number of scoreboard operators at Wimbledon. 5 - number of minutes it took for Milligan to win a point against Henman. 13,120 - seats on Centre Court.

TODAY'S WEATHER
Showers Maximum temperature 21C

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Brown among variety of England options

DEREK PRINGLE
Cricket Correspondent

There is little doubt that England's selectors are becoming an increasingly progressive bunch. Having selected their last squad over the phone, they will select the next one knowing that five of the team have not played any first-class cricket since Lord's.

As the players involved are Michael Atherton (rest), Graeme Hick (rest), Chris Lewis (resting niggle), Peter Martin (rest) and Alan Mullaly (no county game), massive changes are clearly not imminent. Whether holding a bat or

bucket and spade, the selectors obviously know who they want and while many may feel that Hick would be better off batting his way back to form, the man himself clearly feels he will respond better to a break.

Yet having managed to pull the sabbatical off - by persuading counties to rest players involved at Lord's - England's coach, David Lloyd, is breaking fresh ground. The practice may not be new abroad, but it is here, the clearest indicator yet of how much the selectors' power is increasing.

Ironically, though, the same sacrifice has not been made by

Essex, who refused to release Graham Gooch after Raymond Illingworth requested his presence at games other than the one scheduled for Southend, where Essex are playing Surrey.

It is the first time Illingworth has asked Essex to release Gooch, which is not unreasonable, and it appears that the chairman of selectors - still smarting over his fine - has been snubbed for the second time in 10 days. It calls out for a headline reading "Selector selected. Players not playing".

Even so, with so much recently focused on events off the field, the selectors must not become distracted. With Pakistan

following next week's final Test against India at Trent Bridge, the chairman must now decide whether the time is right for England to change tack slightly. If he does - and England faced their first stern task of the summer at Lord's - it will be the bowling that will most readily come under scrutiny.

After two fruitless Test pitches, early reports from Trent Bridge are that the surface is so unresponsive that Brian Bolas, one of Illingworth's scouts and a former selector himself, reckons a two-week Test could not be concluded upon its benign surface.

Normally that would suit England, for whom a draw

would mean a series victory. However, important as that boost may appear, long-term benefits will only emerge if teams are beaten regularly and in all circumstances. If England are to be at their peak against Pakistan, they must dispatch India at Nottingham.

If the pitch does live up to its pre-match billing, both variety and movement will be needed - India had more of both at Lord's - especially if India, who believe in themselves again, are to be bowled out twice. England have to dismiss sides if they want to compete with the best.

For that reason, a genuine

swing bowler like Durham's Simon Brown, must join Lewis and Cork. Darren Gough, who has been taking wickets for Yorkshire, may also be a contender, though he mainly relies on reverse swerving later in the innings for his movement. Mullally has done little wrong, but as he does not swing the ball, a bland Trent Bridge is not for him.

With Min Patel bound to get a second cap, there could be pressure on Ronnie Irani to keep his place. Forced to bat out of character at Lord's, Irani responded with great resolve in helping Jack Russell save the match. But if little more could be asked of his batting, the question mark still

hangs over his effectiveness as a bowler, and the selectors may well be tempted to try the in-form Mark Ealham instead.

The only other way England could conceivably inject some variety would be to select Yorkshire's Michael Vaughan as an opener who bowls off-spin.

With Nick Knight still not properly fit, it would be particularly hard on Alec Stewart after his efforts at Lord's. However, with Illingworth in his current mood, being from a southern county may just have its disadvantages.

My 12th Avenue, Stuart, Hussain, Thorpe, Hick, Lewis, Mullaly, Lewis, Cork, Patel, Martin, Ealham, Brown.

Briton equals course record

Golf

England's Steve Richardson reversed his recent wretched form in Paris yesterday. The 28-year-old former Ryder Cup player equalled both the course record and the best round of his life with a nine-under-par 63.

Richardson now leads the tournament with a 13-under-par total of 131 at half-way. The European No 1 Colin Montgomerie, however, sank a nine-foot eagle putt on the final green for a 64 but discovered that he had still missed the cut.

His two-under aggregate was one too many, and he criticised the course for being too easy. "I prefer to play where the errant drive is punished," he said. "Here the ball goes further the wider you go. It's a good course made easy by having no rough."

Richardson, 14th on this season's money list before the event, has a two-stroke advantage over the Ulsterman Raymond Burns, with Ian Woosnam, defending champion Paul Broadhurst and South African Retief Goosen one shot further back.

"This is the first time in a long while I've felt comfortable with my swing," Richardson said. "I've been trying to shorten it a bit - sometimes with the driver I could see the tip of the club out of the corner of my eye."

Burns shaved a stroke off his opening 67 to move into second place and then gave a very different view of Le Golf National to Montgomerie. "It's a pleasure to play on a course with good greens, good bunkers, good fairways and good tee boxes," said the 22-year-old former Walker Cup amateur.

Broadhurst, winner by eight last year, was only a shot away from his own course record as the work he has put in this season with Montgomerie's coach, Bill Ferguson, showed its first real dividend with a 64.

Woosnam, another Ferguson pupil, was delighted with his latest new putter as he returned 65. "It's the best I've felt on the greens in a long while," said the Welshman, who needs a top-five finish to regain top place in the Order of Merit from Montgomerie. Goosen also eagled the last - and so did Ballessteros, for a 66 that left him six under and smiling broadly.

Corser sets fastest practice time

Motorcycling

Troy Corser, of Australia, pipped Britain's Carl Fogarty for provisional pole position in last Sunday's fifth round of the World Superbike Championship at Brno, Czech Republic, with a formidable lap in yesterday's opening practice session.

Corser was more than half a second faster on his Ducati than the back-to-form Fogarty, who insists there is still more to come from his Castrol Honda team. "It's definitely a track that suits Corser but that doesn't mean to say I've given up on pole position this weekend," Fogarty said.

"It took me most of the session to dial in but I'm now a lot happier about my suspension settings for the rest of the weekend."

Fogarty's fellow Lancastrian Neil Hodgson took third place from his Ducati team-mate John Kocinski.

Northants edge closer in the rain

HENRY BLOFIELD

reports from Northampton Derbyshire 98 & 210-7 Northamptonshire 210

Events unfolded almost as dramatically off the field as they did on it at Wantage Road yesterday. While the weather which claimed 47 overs was the only factor to hold up Northamptonshire's first Championship victory of the season, Harry Brind and Donald Carr arrived from Lord's to inspect the troublesome pitch.

Once again the uneven bounce was exaggerated, as it always will be, by Ambrose although it was the fear of what might happen rather than what actually did happen that caused most of the wickets to fall.

There was a twist to the story of the pitch when it was revealed that Carr, the chairman of the pitches committee at Lord's, had made a routine visit to the ground last Wednesday.

While there, he was asked his view of the two pitches available for this match. He said he thought the one which had already been used for Tuesday's NatWest Trophy looked the better of the two and would be less likely to produce a clatter of wickets. This was either a most damning comment on the state of the square as a whole or one of those judgements that have a habit of returning to haunt cricket administrators.

The first arrival yesterday was Brind, the inspector of pitches who automatically becomes involved if 15 or more wickets fall in a day's Championship cricket. He inspected the surface but his thoughts and suggestions will not be revealed until the match is over.

He was followed after lunch by a return visit from Carr who drove up the M1 to make sure that his eyes had not deceived him on Wednesday. He will also remain silent until the game has finished.

Derbyshire again made a bad start when play began at 2.15 after rain. In the first 10 overs they lost both openers to slip catches off Ambrose and Paul Taylor. This brought together Chris Adam and Dean Jones in Derbyshire's first stand of real substance in the match.

Adams pulled vigorously at anything at all short and when the ball was pitched up he once or twice pulled or slogged it away over mid-wicket. He reached 50 in 512 balls with one six and seven fours while Jones made sure the other end was safe. They had put on 92 when John Emburey made one run and lift in the over before tea and Jones was out to a juggling catch at short leg.

After tea, Ambrose claimed 3 for 7 in a fiercely hostile spell of 22 balls including Adams who played on. It was left to Phillip DeFreitas and Karl Kricken to lift Derbyshire's lead to 98 with bad light and rain claiming six of the last 10 overs.

Pearson provokes late Essex collapse

Round-up

Essex slumped into trouble against Surrey at Southend as they lost three wickets in the final six overs after Graham Gooch and Paul Grayson had opened with century stand.

Grayson, having made 62 out of a partnership of 131, was snapped up round the corner by Alec Stewart off Richard Pearson, the nightwatchman. Darren Bicknell then struck in the final over when he had Nasser Hussain caught at silly mid-off for nought.

That left Essex 134 for 3 and relying heavily on Gooch, unbeaten on 46, if they are to reach the 327 needed to avoid being asked to follow on.

Surrey, who resumed at 345 for 3, spent a further 47 overs in carrying their total to 476 for 8 before Stewart declared.

Graham Thorpe added only six to his overnight score before being bowled by Peter Sach for 143, but Adam Hollis collected his third century of the summer. He finally went for 128, caught off a mistimed pull against Cowan, after an innings which brought him 17 boundaries and spanned 340 minutes.

Hollisake and Thorpe, whose innings included 14 fours and a six, put on 201 for the fourth wicket.

The biggest stand of the match, 70, between John Morris and Stewart Hutton put Durham in a strong position against Gloucestershire at Chester-le-Street. With only 54 overs bowled because of rain yesterday Durham raised hopes of their first Championship win of the season by reaching 92 for 1 in their second innings - a lead of 101.

Melvyn Betts recorded career-best figures for the fourth time this season, taking his tally of wickets to 31 by finishing with 5 for 68 as Gloucestershire were dismissed for 166.

Betts and Simon Brown, who now has 40 wickets, bowled unchanged for 20 overs to polish off Gloucestershire after they had resumed on 90 for 5.

India resisted the temptation of trying to force a victory against British Universities by batting right through the final day of the game at Fenners. Rahul Dravid took the opportunity to score his first century of the tour with a six and 15 fours in his unbeaten 101 as the students used eight bowlers.

DAVID LLEWELYN
reports from Lord's Middlesex 413 Warwickshire 76-1

Starting at an empty cricket ground could be a job for sinners in hell. Weather-watching accounted for 46 overs yesterday and the match drifted in and out of focus, as Middlesex meandered through an interrupted morning into a dull afternoon.

Mark Ramprakash's departure after he had added five runs to his overnight 164 - and even those took him 27 deliveries -

DEREK HODGSON
reports from Worcester Yorkshire 321 Worcestershire 147-3

The chairman of selectors, Ray Illingworth, was still unable to get a selector to New Road on the second day - are there any old selectors available for part-time jobbing? - but it was the "A" team candidates for Australia in October, rather than Test hopefuls against Pakistan next month, who shone in the gloom and drizzle.

Reuben Spiring, 21-year-old son of the old Liverpool striker Peter, led a Worcestershire counter-attack and reached an-

other half-century with a smashing square cut off Darren Gough. He now has four 50s and a century in six matches.

Fast-medium Chris Silverwood, also 21, is a new kind of cricketer, teetotal and a karate black belt. He took two wickets in two balls, including Tom Moody's.

After waiting until 2 p.m. to start, Yorkshire might have profited more from an overnight declaration at 312-7. They batted another half-hour to gain just nine runs for three wickets. David Byas may have hoped for another rapid 50 but Gough dolled to cover after attempting an horrendous heave. Stuart Lampitt's length and direction was altogether too good for Sil-

verwood and Richard Stemp. And if Byas was hoping that his seamers would be as effective, he was gravely disappointed. The pitch may not have been as lively as on Thursday, although it must be wearing. Gough was quick but his direction wavered, while Hartley found the line without winning much movement before leaving the field with a side strain.

Eleven overs had gone before Gough trapped Phil Weston and another 20 had been added before Silverwood, who had replaced Hartley after three overs, cheered Yorkshire's travelling support with his two wickets. Matthew Church, on 29, just cleared short leg's upstretched fingertips from the last

shot was not exactly textbook. In fact it was a stroke made more in self-defence after Pollock got another to lift. Tufnell then attempted an extravagant drive next ball and was bowled by a ball of fuller length. Pollock finished with his best figures for Warwickshire of 6 for 56.

Slow left-arm Tufnell had the penultimate word, rudely interrupting Neil Smith's innings when the batsman went back, stabbed forward and missed the ball, which did not miss his pads. Sadly for a match needing some light relief dark skies had the last word, driving everyone off with over an hour left.

Warwickshire have been summoned to Lord's after receiving a "below average" marking for their Test match pitch for the second year in succession. The Test and County Cricket Board will express their concern when Warwickshire officials appear before the pitches committee next week.

Tim Lamb, the TCCB cricket secretary, said: "The Board are concerned about pitch preparation at Edgbaston and we will be doing everything possible via the pitches committee to sort it out. The matter needs to be addressed urgently. Warwickshire have to accept there is a problem."

Pollock's six wickets light up dark day

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Inspired Spiring lifts Worcestershire

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CRICKET SCOREBOARD			
BRITANNIC ASSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP			
Second day of four; 11.0 today			
Derbyshire v Gloucestershire			
CHURCHILL-LE-STREET: Derbyshire (Aps), with the second innings wickets standing, are 301 runs ahead of Gloucestershire (4).			
Gloucestershire won 100			
DURHAM v Essex			
First innings: 175 (A M Smith 4-30)			
GLoucestershire v Essex			
First innings: 175 (A M Smith 4-30)			
Essex v Surrey			
SOUTHWICK: Essex (4th), with seven first-class wickets standing, are 342 runs behind Surrey (5).			
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Germans lifted by chance to call up new players

GLENN MOORE

Football Correspondent

Germany yesterday persuaded UEFA to bend their own rules in an attempt to field a fit team for tomorrow's European Championship final. Having threatened to reduce the final to a farce by playing their goalkeepers as outfield players, the favourites were given permission to call up two more players from Germany.

The controversial decision – which clearly flouts competition rules – does mean the final is unlikely to be derailed. But one wonders if UEFA, European football's governing body, would have been so understanding if it was the Czechs, who do not have an influential voice in the corridors of powers, who had been offered.

Berti Vogts, the German coach, was last night considering who to call up. Earlier in the tournament, Vogts had refused to replace the injured Mario Basler when it was permissible.

Instead gambling that the player would recover.

Vogts had earlier suggested that his reserve goalkeepers, Oliver Kahn and Oliver Reck, may play and had ordered outfield shirts for them. Had the match been yesterday the pair would have played – only 13 Germans were able to train and they included Stefan Reuter and Andy Möller, both of whom are suspended from the final.

Germany's problems mean little can be inferred from the Group C meeting between these sides, won comfortably by Germany at Old Trafford. So much has changed since, its only relevance is that it was the game in which Reuter and Möller collected their first bookings.

This observer, having ended the report of that match with the suggestion that spectators "may have seen the future champions" is tempted to boast. However, it would be stretching a point to pretend the Czechs had also been in mind.

Their subsequent arrival in the final is a testament to their

organisation and spirit as much as their ability. Having conceded six goals in the group stages, they kept successive clean sheets in the knock-out rounds, including a spell of extra-time.

Bert van Lingen, the assistant manager of the Dutch side which was beaten by the Czechs in the qualifying rounds, said: "We knew a year ago they were a good team. They remind me of the Romanians in Italia '90."

Even so, it is a surprise to find them in the final. While most east European teams draw players from all over the continent, the Czechs have 15 home-based players, including some in the Second Division. That may change with Karol Poborsky at-

tracting Liverpool and Manchester United and goalkeeper Petr Kouba interesting Wolves. Poborsky, Patrik Berger and Pavel Kuka are potential match-winners. The latter pair are among five Bundesliga players – what an incentive they have to win. Kouba has a thigh strain and is said to be doubtful.

The Czechs are likely to field a five-man back line and a four-man midfield. As a boost to their "booze-and-bonking" image, which is attracting floating support as much as their "underdogs" tag, they promise to play Vladimir Smicer, who flew home on Thursday to get married.

The German line-up will be dictated by the doctors. Jürgen

Kohler and Mario Basler have already returned home with injury, while Fredi Bobic dislocated his shoulder last Sunday. Jürgen Klinsmann (calf), Thomas Helmer (knee), Steffen Freund (knee) are very doubtful; Christian Ziege (shin), Stefan Kuntz (calf) and Marcus Bode (pulled muscle), are merely doubtful.

Even the prospect of penalties would not give Germany the usual confidence. The Germans have not lost a penalty shoot-out in 20 years (scoring 18 of 19 kicks in that time) but the one they did is still remembered in Prague.

It was in the final of the 1976 Championships. They are said to be still searching the Belgrade

streets for the ball Uli Hönes blasted over Ivo Viktor's goal, while Antonin Panenka's chipped winner is continually copied – most recently by Dwight Yorke in the FA Cup against Sheffield United.

That is the only time a Czech team has defeated a German one in 14 matches dating back to 1964 – when they were called West Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Before the tournament began there was a lot of talk about a "new nation", inspired by its restored sense of identity, doing well. Croatia failed to meet expectation but a less heralded newcomer – one which lost to Luxembourg in qualifying – has surpassed them.

Only 4,000 tickets have gone to the Czechs, 11,000 to Germany. Dusan Uhrin's side will have the bulk of neutral support in an allegedly "sold-out" crowd. If everyone turns up, it will be the largest attendance for a European Championship final in 32 years. It is unlikely to be the best one, but the Czechs could have one final surprise left.

HOW THEY REACHED THE FINAL

Czech Republic

Group C: 9 June: lost to Germany 0-2 at Old Trafford; 14 June: beat Italy 2-1 (Nedved, Bejbl) at Anfield; 19 June: drew with Russia 3-3 (Sushchansk, Kuka, Smicer) at Anfield.

Quarter-final: 23 June: beat Portugal 1-0 (Poborsky) at Villa Park.

Semi-final: 26 June: drew with France 0-0 at: won 6-5 on penalties at Old Trafford.

Germany

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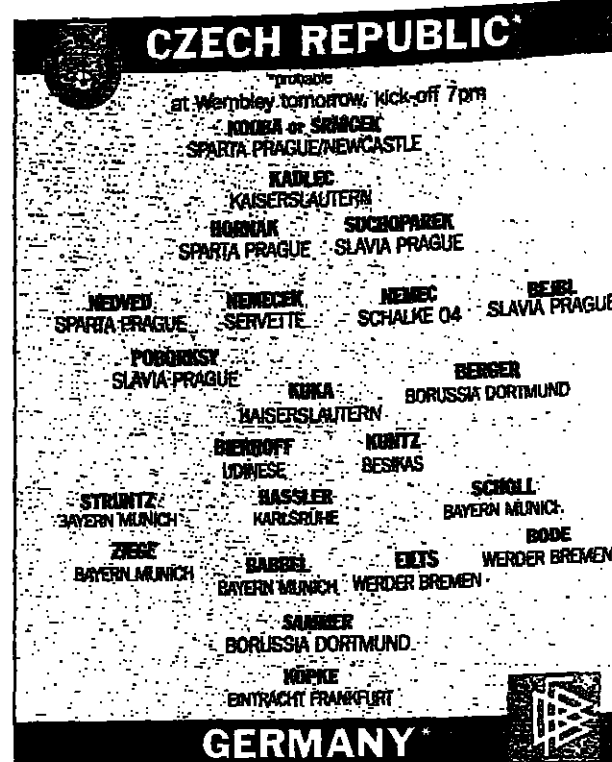
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Team spirit: The Czech Republic celebrate the penalty by Miroslav Kadelec after extra time that booked their place in the final

Photograph: John Giles/PA



Sammer heir to throne of Beckenbauer

Clive White on the sweeper who has played a key role in Germany's success

CLIVE WHITE

With his red hair and even redder face Matthias Sammer – "Feuerkopf" as he is known – looks more like a Brit who has overdone the sunbathing on a Costa Brava beach than the heir to the throne of the bronzed Aryan, Franz Beckenbauer. Yet this is the man who has been described as the most complete German footballer since "the Kaiser" and like the great man himself is expected to lead Germany by example to their third European title at Wembley tomorrow.

Furthermore, many believe that the former East German, the first from the old country to play for unified Germany, is destined one day to become the nation's coach, just like Beckenbauer. But that is for the future. Sammer, the only player other than the Bulgarian, Hristo Stoichkov, to pick up two official man of the match awards at this championship, has made great strides in the game since his conversion from midfielder to sweeper.

His timely advances from the back, in the true fashion of a libero, have been crucial to the success of a German team that has yet to touch the heights of some of its forerunners. When Germany were overcome with self-doubt – a rare experience – against Croatia, it was Sammer who forced the penalty from which Jürgen Klinsmann scored early on. And when the Croats were reduced to 10 men, it was again Sammer who was on hand to take full advantage of the situation to strike the winner.

A man who has curtailed the international career of Lothar Matthäus has to be a bit special. Yet Germany's Footballer of the Year never considers himself as such. After steering Borussia Dortmund to a second successive Bundesliga title last season, the 28-year-old said: "I can't play at that level for the rest of my life. I'm not that great a player."

Ottmar Hitzfeld, the Borussia coach, hinted at where he thought Sammer's career was leading when he said: "Of all my players, he is the only one who thinks as a coach."

His thoughtful approach to the game may have had something to do with the fact that his father, Klaus, was once coach of Dynamo Dresden, Sammer Jr's first club where he earned 1,320 East German marks a month. When he moved to VfB Stuttgart for £730,000 in 1990 his salary increased thirtyfold. The "Ossi", as they call East Germans, has not forgiven or forgotten his past. "I feel sorry for the older people [of the GDR] for whom four decades of life were ruined," he said. Sammer himself was once investigated by the Stasi – the East German secret police – for his West German connections.

After his peerless performances in this tournament one might expect Serie A clubs to be forming a queue outside the twin towers tomorrow, if it was not for the fact that he has already been tried and discarded by the Italians. Before joining Borussia, he spent a short spell with Internazionale. "I scored four goals in the first six games and then they bought Darko Pancev and I was out," he said. "It would have been good to stay but not for me as a man."

Old Feuerkopf has already found his place in the sun.



Sammer: Complete player

Czechs ready for history to repeat itself

As if the success of the Czech Republic were not surprising enough, their imminent appearance in the Euro 96 final provoked the unprecedented spectacle yesterday of a Newcastle United player defending negative tactics.

Pavel Smicer, who will play in goal against Germany at Wembley tomorrow, if Petr Kouba's thigh injury does not heal, was unrepentant in the face of suggestions that they were unduly defensive during the semi-final with France. "Look," he said, "people can say what they want but they would all swap places with us, includ-

ing England. They forget that we had four players suspended and another [Patrik Berger] not fit to start."

What that football utopian, Kevin Keegan, would make of his keeper's comments is open to conjecture. The Czechs are merely reveling in confounding experts and bookmakers alike. "They put us at the bottom because they didn't know us," Smicer said. "They've changed their tune now."

He offered no pretence about their priorities. "We start by trying to keep a clean sheet, and build from there. We don't defend in separate blocks, but

Phil Shaw looks at the outsiders and the rewards they hope to win tomorrow

as a team, from the strikers back. People talk about the skill of [Karel] Poborsky and Berger, rightly so, but the big thing is that we play as a unit. We were very tired in extra time on Wednesday, but we helped each other through."

Smicer is one of seven players based in the West. The final now becomes a shop window for these keen to follow. Pavel Nedved may be first. PSV Eindhoven having warned off Lazio by claiming the Spar-

ta Prague midfielder has a "pre-contractual" agreement with them.

Coventry want Slavia's Radek Bejbl, another midfielder, while his club-mate Sammer is a colleague. "And there are more good young players coming through," Smicer said. "We have several here with us."

His own role model was Ivo Viktor, "our Gordon Banks" and now assistant to coach Dusan Uhrin. "I remember his farewell game and I bought the

book of his life story. Because of his inspiration, we've always had good keepers, even when the national team weren't doing well."

A case in point is the elegant Berger. At 22, he has a German champions' medal with Borussia Dortmund, where Matthias Sammer is a colleague. "And there are more good young players coming through," Smicer said. "We have several here with us."

His own role model was Ivo Viktor, "our Gordon Banks" and now assistant to coach Dusan Uhrin. "I remember his farewell game and I bought the

book of his life story. Because of his inspiration, we've always had good keepers, even when the national team weren't doing well."

Smicer watched on television when Viktor helped Czechoslovakia beat West Germany then World Cup holders and featuring Berti Vogts in defence, in the 1976 final. "We talked about the coincidence before we arrived. Our ice hockey team were world champions then, like now. When we said history was going to repeat itself, people said we were going too far. Now we feel we can do it – we're very positive."

Youngsters of Europe united by football and fun

Today, a Derbyshire village could achieve what our national side was unable to do – win Euro 96 for England. For the past week, cries of "We're on our way to Clapham" have been echoing around Shardlow, whose team have conceded just one goal in their qualifying matches (see your heart out, Terry Venables).

Wembley, unfortunately, is otherwise occupied on final day tomorrow. But the sponsor Coca-Cola has not let a mere detail wreck the dreams of 10 nations. "If we can't have it, we'll build it," the company decided. So this week it constructed a replica of England's showpiece ground – royal box, pines, towers and all – on south London's Clapham Common. When you're 14 years old and you have come all the way from Croatia, Romania or Turkey, who cares if Wembley is on the wrong side of the Thames?

Shardlow St James' manager, Gary Smith, is still slightly amazed that his under-15 squad landed up in the Leeds regional qualifier for the Coca-Cola Junior European Tournament, the six-a-side team, one of 64 that competed at Roundhay Park, is a pretty handy side, in-



KEITH ELLIOTT

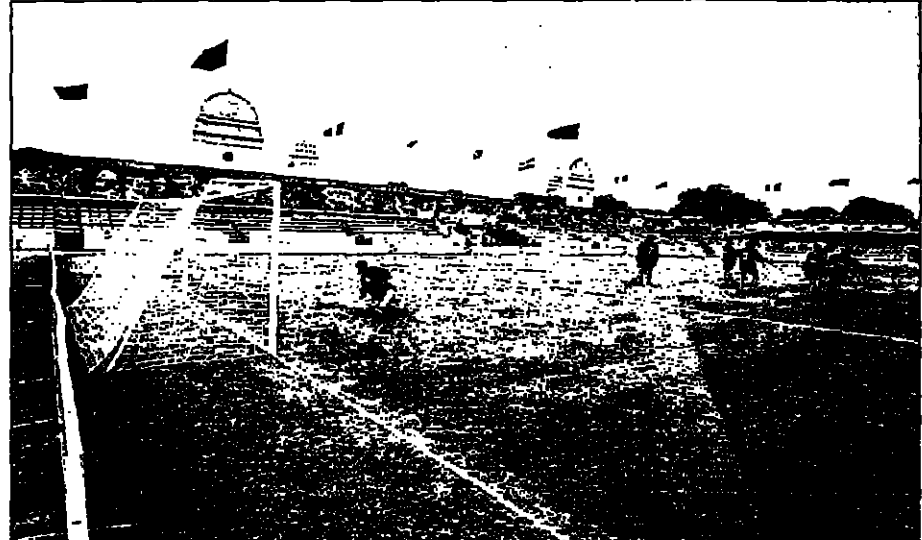
AT THE OTHER EURO 96

cluding Nathan Stanton, who has trials for Mansfield next season, and Gary's son Stephen, who has trained with Derby. But this competition, for girls and boys, is not aimed at tomorrow's stars – players from schools of excellence are officially excluded. It is all part of the FA/Coca-Cola development programme, providing grassroots activities for children to play football. In this age group, the sport is refreshingly free of cynical tripping, shirt-tugging and boot-checking. It is played for fun, not money, as an all-Asian team from Huddersfield shows.

Magsood Akhtar's Extra Hot Five were knocked out in the early stages. "We're more used to playing five-a-side indoors than on grass," Magsood said philosophically afterwards. "Still, we have won two major five-a-side events and represented Yorkshire in a national competition."

That's pretty good, considering that the squad is run on a shoestring. Magsood pays most of their expenses himself, though he is studying for a BSc in leisure management and his only income comes from working as a part-time coach for Kirkstall Council. "We can't afford to take part in an 11-a-side league because of a lack of finance," he says. "Asian businesses won't support us because they are more interested in cricket, while other businesses won't back us because we are all Asian."

Tom Baxter, manager of Meanwood Boys, from Leeds, was disappointed that his team, winners of the Hargrave under-15 league for the past three years, were beaten in the semi-finals. The canard that went to the winning coach would have been nice, though he had planned to sell it and split



Wembley rebuilt on Clapham Common for the junior Euro 96

Photograph: Edward Sykes

the profits between his team anyway. What he really wanted, however, was for his side to go to London and be scooped up by scouts from the major clubs. "This is what we aim at, but the clubs don't seem to send scouts round any more, spotting talent."

Still, for youngsters who don't think they will make it at football, there was an Army in-

formation office on hand at Roundhay Park. Players who weren't worn out by a round-robin of 10-minute matches could try their hand at an assault course, which led neatly to a recruiting exhibition. "The main questions they ask are: 'Will I be sent to Northern Ireland?' and 'Will I be able to play football?'" a sergeant said.

player, Louise, who plays for Morley Girls, headed the ball without a break more than 60 times (significantly more than Baddiel and Skinner managed on *Fantasy Football*). But even at six-a-side, it's no good relying on one star. Her side came nowhere, beaten by eventual winners Leeds United Girls.

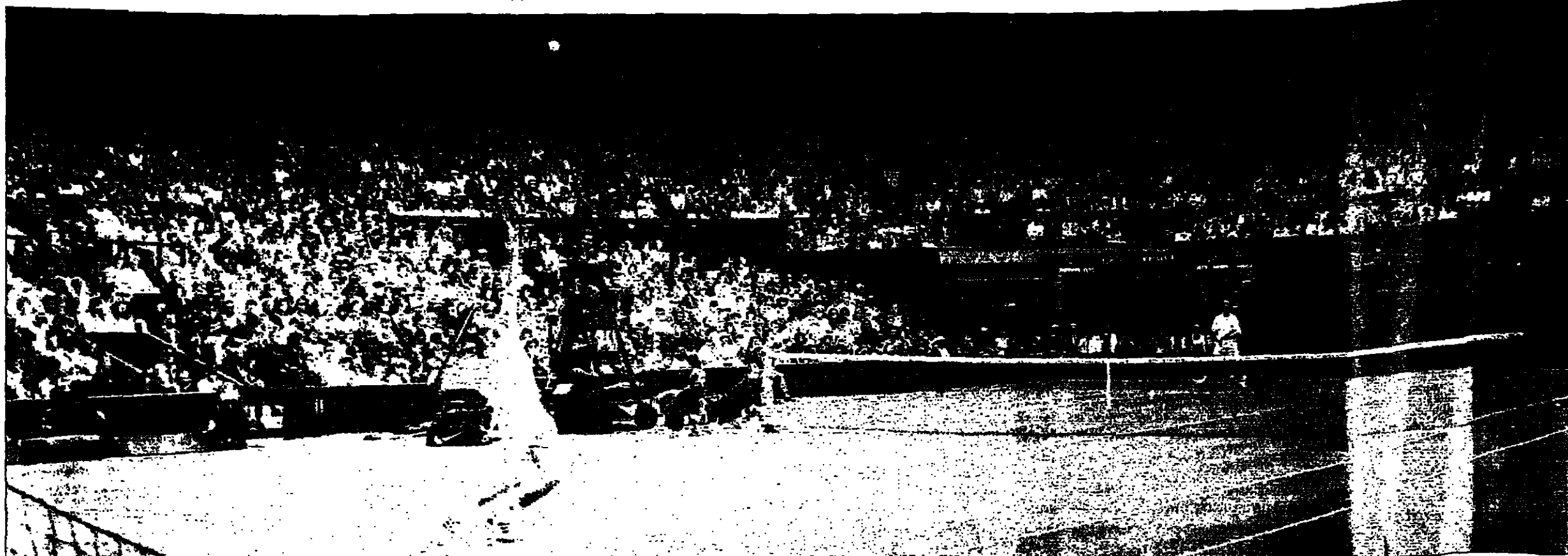
Seven girls' teams took part, though there were more at several of the other qualifiers. The idea that they should be considered equal to the boys came as quite a shock to some. "They were really surprised to find there were medals and cups for them as well," said Coca-Cola's Rob Cohen. Leeds may have been only one of eight regional finals, but the event drew heavy media attention. Most pressmen, however, were competing in the area finals of Coca-Cola's young reporter competition. The winner was 10-year-old Charles Parry from Acomb. He practises by turning down the television and commenting on matches for the Leeds squad. Unfortunately for the Leeds scout it was a girl, Louise Marshall, who looked the most skilful.

He picked up slightly under the National Union of Journalists official rate for match reporting, going home with a hat and a T-shirt. But with budding backs from regional heats in the other seven host cities, he travelled to London for the finals. A dazzling analysis of England's midfield deficiencies there could win him a far greater reward – a trip to Brazil.

Today's round-robin matches will decide which of the eight teams will represent England. The internationals take place tomorrow. Group matches will mirror the senior event, with England playing Scotland, the Netherlands and Switzerland at first. Winning teams – boys and girls – get a free trip to Brazil, which includes games against junior sides there, coaching from Brazilian internationals and the chance to have their performances dissected in print by the winning young reporter.

Coca-Cola has been so impressed by the success of mini-Euro 96 that it is looking at a similar event in two years' time. If that went ahead, we might even see Shardlow playing Brazil in the World Cup final.

'Most of all there was a feeling that English supporters might just might have a way to express their nationalism without becoming a national embarrassment. How the fans played a blinder



Battle of the Britons: Tim Henman and Luke Milligan will have to wait for today to finish their third-round singles match after rain stopped play yesterday at Wimbledon

Photograph: David Asdown

Henman tries to keep up the impe

JOHN ROBERTS
Tennis Correspondent

It is argued that the event is bigger than any player, as was demonstrated in 1973, the year of the ATP boycott, when the leading men stayed away but the crowds did not. The theory may be about to be put to the test again.

Boris Becker was the latest major personality to fall yesterday, injury causing the three-times former champion to join Andre Agassi, Monica Seles and Stefan Edberg in a procession through the exit with the tournament only five days old.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the fifth seed and French Open champion, also disappeared early, but that counts as a bonus, Tim Henman's brilliant first-round victory against the Russian giving the British No 1 the impetus to drive on towards the fourth round.

Henman was on the brink of securing his place in the second week when rain interrupted play yesterday. He was leading his compatriot, Luke Milligan, 6-1, 6-3, 5-4 and was about to serve for the match. But who ever emerges victorious, any euphoria will be tempered by the injury to Becker.

The 28-year-old German, who was seeded to meet Pete Sampras, the defending champion, in a reprise of last year's

final, retired after damaging his right wrist during his third-round match on Court No 1 against Neville Godwin, a South African qualifier ranked No 223 in the world.

Becker hit a second service return wide off the frame on the opening point of a first set tie-break, dropped his racket, and grabbed his wrist in agony. The trainer bandaged the injury, but Becker abandoned the court after attempting a couple of practice swings.

The second serve was sliding into my body, and I hit the ball on the frame, very late, and the wrist gave way and I heard something go pop," Becker said. "I thought I had broken my wrist."

The trainer thinks that a piece of bone could be chipped off from the tendon.

His wife, Barbara, covered her face while Becker was receiving treatment, and his early departure was a disappointment for the five members of the German football team who had come to support him.

Becker, who won his sixth Grand Slam singles title at the Australian Open in January, missed the French Open because of a thigh injury. "I guess this one feels much worse," he said, "because I was one of the

few who had a serious chance of winning the whole thing. I was playing great tennis, the draw didn't look too bad, and it's a very serious disappointment. An injury never comes at the

right time, but if there's one tournament a year where I really would like to do well, it's Wimbledon. It's the highlight of my season, and I had as good a chance to win it this year as I've had in a long time."

Becker, who in 1985 became the youngest and only seeded men's singles champion, aged 17, has experienced his greatest moments at the All England Club, along with some of the lower points of his career.

He successfully defended the title in 1986 and won it again in 1989. But in 1987 he was defeated in the second round on Court No 1 by the Australian Peter Doohan. Apart from Doohan, and Goran Ivanisevic, who won their semi-final two years ago, every player who has beaten Becker since 1985 has gone on to win the title.

While that statistic might impress Godwin, he will do well to extend the record, even though the lower half of the draw is wide open.

"He played a very good set," Becker acknowledged, "and he seems to have a pretty good feel for the ball."

Godwin had mixed emotions. "It feels great, obviously, to be in the fourth round at Wimbledon," he said. "It's something I'm sure any tennis player dreams of. But obviously it's the way I would have liked to get there. I would have liked to win the match fair and square but I guess these days you what you can get."

He added: "I was in during the warm-up and I first couple of games, but I relaxed a bit and even seemed to be going smoother. I was feeling and waiting for the match, ry on, and I guess it just a Milligan's nerves we

Hoddle promises no sudden changes

No new brooms, but probably a sweeper, that was the gist of Glenn Hoddle's first message to the nation as coach of England.

As the village of Bisham returned to normal yesterday Hoddle eased himself into the seat so recently occupied by Terry Venables. With John Gorman, his assistant, sitting alongside Hoddle stressed that he was seeking to build on

Venables' adoption of continental ideas.

"My philosophy is not too different to Terry's. The system will be tinkered with but there won't be drastic changes. It won't differ that much from what I did at Swindon and Chelsea. There will just be slight changes to take into account the opposition and international football. I play with three at the back and

Glenn Moore hears England's new coach outline his plans to build on the foundations provided by Terry Venables

players pushed into midfield. It is similar to the way the Germans have played for a long time.

Hoddle intends to play with a sweeper - if he can find one. "It would be silly to back myself into a corner now and say we will play with a sweeper. If

you don't feel you have the right person it would be silly to do it."

Gorman hinted that he and Hoddle did have someone in mind. "The best player I have seen doing it was Glenn," Gorman said. "He could play at the back and realise, within 10 minutes, that the other team didn't demand we play with a sweeper, and he would go into midfield and give them a problem. There is a player in this country who is possibly ready to do that."

Venables had suggested Gareth Southgate could, was that who they had in mind?

"Gareth has done magnificently, he has been a real bonus but there might be another guy in the squad, lurking," Gorman replied. "Almost every player who goes into that position has been a midfielder. It might be a younger player."

"It does not have to be in place for the Moldova game, we are looking to the future."

Intriguing. As well as Southgate Paul Ince, Sol Campbell and Gary Neville come to mind, or even Jamie Redknapp.

The Moldova match is on 1 September in Chisinau where both Wales and Georgia have lost. It is both Hoddle's debut and the first match of the World Cup qualifying campaign. With Italy, Poland and Georgia also in the group England need to win it.

Hoddle has nine weeks and three Premiership programmes in which to select his team. Time constraints mean he is unable

to arrange a preliminary get-together so he will travel to key players to discuss his aims.

"We have seen Moldova and Poland once and are due to see Moldova again," Hoddle said. Hoddle stressed his main aim was qualifying for France in 1998, not building a team to do well once there. To that end he

management. It was working with him and the French system that made me think 'yes, I fancy putting a few of those ideas down on paper and maybe, one day, trying them out on a pitch'."

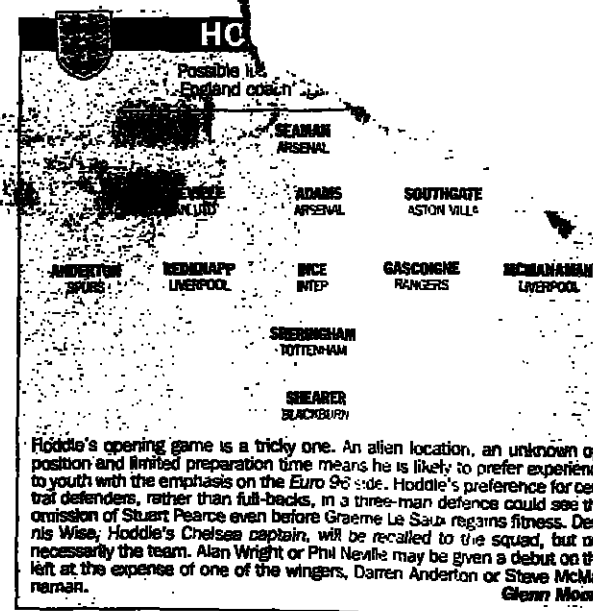
Both men said they had learned from Euro 96 with Gorman hinting that Hoddle's preference for attacking full-backs may be adapted after seeing Venables playing the same system with attacking players, like Steve McManaman and Darren Anderton, in those positions.

In the long term, hinted Hoddle, he may bring dieticians, masseurs and other such specialists into the England set-up. First he has to meet Venables' support staff to decide if any are to stay on. The only certainty is Don Howe who is directly employed by the FA and in his role of technical co-ordinator, has tasks outside the coaching of the England team.

Hoddle will also be tapping Venables' thoughts, the outgoing coach will doubtless pass on the German files on Moldova and Georgia which Berti Vogts promised Venables this week.

"[England] were very pleasing," Hoddle said. "From a selfish point of view it may have been easier for me if we had come out of the tournament in the first stages but I wouldn't have wanted that. The increased expectation does not make it harder, success breeds success. The positive vibe around the country has got to be good."

The coach is gone. Long live the new coach.

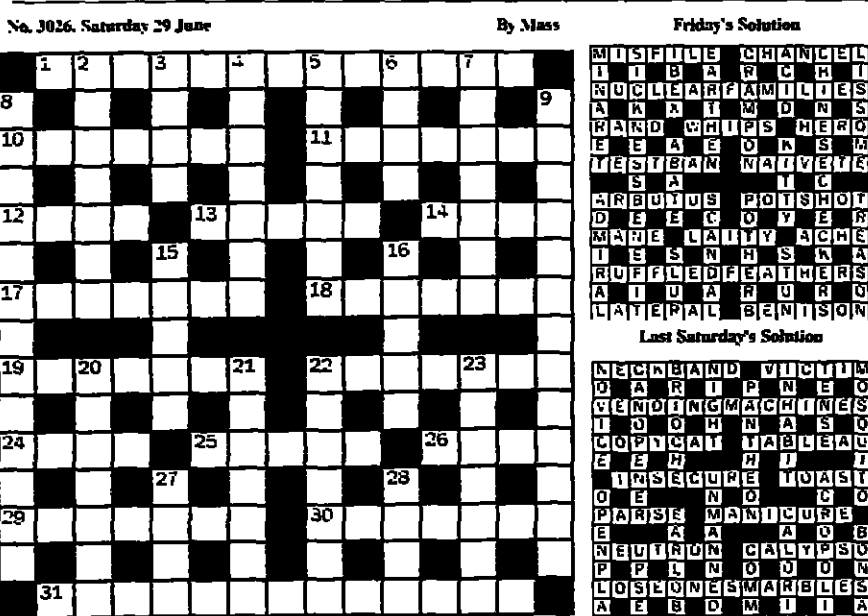


Hoddle's opening game is a tricky one. An alien location, an unknown opposition and limited preparation time means he is likely to prefer experienced youth with the emphasis on the Euro 96 side. Hoddle's preference for central defenders, rather than full-backs, in a three-man defence could see the inclusion of Stuart Pearce even before Grimey Le Saux regains fitness. Dennis Wise, Hoddle's Chelsea captain, will be recalled to the squad, but not necessarily the team. Alan Wright or Phil Neville may be given a debut on the left at the expense of one of the wingers, Darren Anderton or Steve McManaman.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

Lost for words?

Turn to the Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus.



- ACROSS
- A fair prospect (6-7)
 - Blind enclosure we'd carelessly entered (7)
 - Land creature quietly making off (7)
 - Stable's caused reduction in the odds (4)
 - Mineral for twisting? Pop, with touch of zip (5)
 - Wait for declaration by East (4)
 - Precise US measure applied to Capone (7)
 - Solvent, having reduced corporation? (7)
 - Worked trickery on Edward (7)
 - He always wants his own way! (4-3)
- DOWN
- Some have swallow-like features (4)
 - Take in drug, pungent (5)
 - Bind with contract (4)
 - Coal left before fire (7)
 - Dark fruit - extra pound, look (7)
 - Get impure iron changed to condition of first delivery (13)
 - Left-over cards ultimately dealt (7)
 - Joint sustained, cut about one (4)
 - Etiquette of a deity with beaten gold face of Lares (3-4)
 - Rejected and cut, a set turned irritable (7)
 - Separate species (4)
 - Cunning racket set up around Virginia (7)

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SUMMER OF SPORT

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



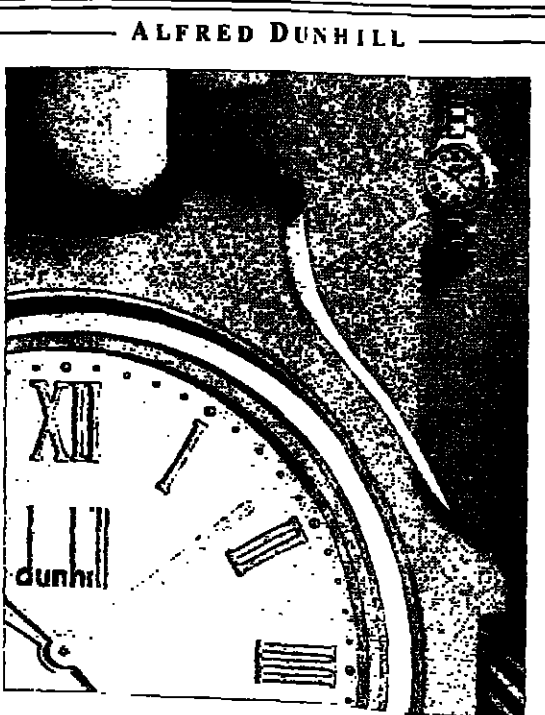
'He may not have been the messiah, but he took the mess out of it all'

Ian Ridley on the legacy Terry Venables leaves to Glenn Hoddle Plus: Stan Hay on Dieter Eits; and, a whole new board game reliving England's Euro 96 journey

IN MONDAY'S 32-PAGE SPORTS SECTION

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